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THE SUFFICIENCY OF JESUS

JAMES AUSTIN RICHARDS

THE SUFFICIENCY OF JESUS

BY

JAMES AUSTIN RICHARDS

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WINNETKA, ILLINOIS

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THE SUFFICIENCY OF JESUS
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To H. T. R. who lives the
gospel I try to preach

FOREWORD

THIS book is just a selection of sermons and addresses from an ordinary parish ministry. They were first delivered from notes and then written out substantially as spoken.

My largest indebtedness is always to the one to whom the book is dedicated, but I would also mention Paul Hutchinson, without whose friendly insistence the manuscript would never have been prepared, and who generously took time from his over-busy days to read proofs.

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THE SUFFICIENCY OF JESUS

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I: THE SUFFICIENCY OF JESUS

Mark 9: 8. "And suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves."

IN closing the account of the transfiguration this verse closes the record of an event over which Christian devotion has brooded with singular reverence and wonder. There are two ways of reading the account. One is purely objective. You read the account with as much detachment as you might read the record of one of Pasteur's chemical experiments. So far as possible you determine the ancient date, the distant place, the material circumstances, the psychological substance. You ask just what the experience meant to Peter, James and John. For this method of studying I have the utmost reverence and for the scholars who pursue it I have nothing but Godspeed. All sorts of truth are precious and sacred. All the truths such study can bring back we gratefully accept. But there is another way of reading this account. It sees something here that is typical as well as something that is unique. In this mood the reader finds more than the ancient date, the distant place, the material circumstances, the psychological substance. He feels himself strangely mingling with the story. He finds

within himself something that says, "This was written not only about the experience of Peter, James and John. It was also written about me."

This verse records a transition from the ecstatic to the common-place. The unseen had been vividly real. For these disciples, past ages had come to live again. The ancient law and the prophets had both leaped into the present. Their great friend had been seen with a splendor more than attended him at Nazareth or Capernaum. Voices more than earthly had spoken to them. "And suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves."

It was not the wish of the disciples to have it so. Indeed Peter, so often spokesman for the twelve and now spokesman for the three, suggested that they build three tabernacles and tarry there indefinitely. But no answer was ever given to Peter's suggestion. It seems as if the high powers that had that scene in hand knew better than to linger over the impulse of a fisherman childishly wishing to prolong an experience meant only for a moment. His suggestion was answered only by the event, "And suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves." But as we see how that event returned Peter, James and John to normal life and how, though now they saw Jesus only, to see Jesus only was enough, we can welcome for these disciples what for the moment they could not welcome for themselves.

Is this something that happened only to the three, or is it happening often? With all the

uniqueness is there not also something typical? As you read do you not feel that it is written about you as truly as about the three? Again and again we pass through swift changes from the ecstatic to the common-place and, suddenly looking round about, see no one any more save Jesus only with ourselves. We do not like to have it so and yet as time goes on we find that to have it so is enough, or even an advantage.

I

Indeed this would seem to be precisely what has been happening in the great realm of Christian thought. One needs only to think one's way back a little or turn to the religious literature of fifty years ago to find how great a change has come upon us. Then there were great theological systems commonly accepted, systems grandly and intricately wrought, settling all the major problems of the human mind, placing and explaining all events with ease and accuracy. They knew a very great deal about God and the working of His mind and heart and will. They understood just how the universe came to be, how God is related to it and whither it is tending. To hear a sermon in those days was to go upon a mount of transfiguration, to look out far and near, to behold all time, all events, all created things, bathed in a celestial light. That age was sufficiently recent so that even I can remember something of its charm, growing up as I did beneath the shadow of the oldest theological seminary in America,

whose interests filled the conversation of my home, and I know the mood that feels that with the passing of that age we have seen the passing of a glory from among us. For presently something began to happen. We did not ask it. We did not welcome it. It took no account of us and our desires. In his Barrows lectureship, Dr. Charles W. Gilkey has quoted the late President Burton of Chicago University as saying that no other generation in human history has had to adjust its thinking to so many new facts from so many different quarters in so short a time as has ours. The new astronomy, the new physics and chemistry, the new chronology, the new study of comparative religions, the new social sciences, the new psychology, have swept us from almost every familiar anchorage of the mind and knocked the foundations from how much of the philosophic temper and of the devout imagination. We are not so sure of the law and the prophets as once we were. Moses and Elijah and all their world are less distinct. The great theological systems stand for the most part cold, uninhabited, archaic. To hear a sermon is not so much to scale a mountain as it is to see the far-off peaks that we should like to climb. The words "if," "perhaps," "maybe" and "suppose" have a currency among us in religious conversation that would leave our fathers aghast. And yet the change has been far from being all loss. Indeed it has served to show us some things that cannot be shaken. I wonder if some future historian will not find in our text a

perfect description of our time and say of us, "And suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves."

Along with all these changes that we have not found it easy to welcome, something else has been taking place, something that these very changes have served to emphasize. It is a new vision of Jesus. Past these theologies and philosophies, past the law and the prophets, past the ceremonies of religion, past the Church itself, men are once more gazing upon him. Time fails one to recount how this has come about. The relative eclipse of many of the historic theologies, the labors of religious scholars, the collapse of agnostic scholarship, have all served to make him stand before us more firmly and unescapably. Dean Sperry calls this "the outstanding achievement of the religious mind in the last one hundred years." President McGiffert reminds us that Jesus is more vividly before the imagination of men to-day than he has been at any time since the second Christian century. Our generation sees him as he has not been seen for long. "And suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves."

As Peter, James and John found this enough and more than enough, so do we. It has meant the clarifying, the heightening, the greatening of religion all along the line. Instead of seeing the Church as an ark of salvation, a dispenser of special privileges in the world to come,—of options on the best celestial real estate,—we see the

Church as the living society of the friends of Jesus, organized to do his will here, content to face the unknown in his company. Instead of seeing the Christian as one who believes this or that theory, we see the Christian as one who attempts the much greater thing of following Jesus down the mountainside to where the demoniac boy needs help at the mountain's base, of thinking out for himself all the questions of life at the feet of the Master, of seeking to share the Master's spirit of love and trust towards God and love and service toward men. Yet deeper, instead of learning God from the half pagan ceremonies of the Christian Church and the half pagan philosophies of men, we have come to learn God from this Jesus with whom we are left alone, simply saying that since Jesus is the best we know, God must at least be all of that. It may indeed be well that suddenly looking about we see no one any more save Jesus only, for that promises a rejuvenated Church, a higher Christian life and in the end a dearer knowledge of God.

II

The same thing holds in another way yet more closely confined to our own times. I feel one must have been curiously aloof from our times if one has not felt that some glories have passed away from us in the last twelve years. I suspect that August 1st, 1914, is second to very few dates indeed from which to reckon new eras in the world's

long story. How mighty and secure we felt before that. How glib was our talk of "progress." How confident were we of mastery over life with science every day bringing nature to a new servitude. How proud we were of our "civilization." Other civilizations were gone to be sure. Many other pomps of yesterday were one with Nineveh and Tyre. But this was only to make way for our final and inevitable civilization. Where is that mood now? If it has not gone from you it has gone from millions of men and women and from millions of men and women who are precisely the best informed and most thoughtful of our day. We were worshiping false gods. Now we know ourselves weak, tossed about, imperiled by forces not ourselves and all uncontrolled. The powers of nature that we thought to harness for our service have proved as mighty for destruction as for helpfulness. Devolution has proved to be as possible as evolution seemed inevitable. We used to punctuate the word "progress" with an exclamation point. Now we punctuate it with a question mark. Moreover, it is precisely where our civilization is oldest that it is most rotten. But something is left and our troubled times are serving to call attention to that something as seldom before. Of this phase of our life some other future historian may truly write, "And suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves."

A little over a year ago that astonishing Englishman, Studdert Kennedy, chaplain to the King,

wrote a marvelous little book called "The Word and the Work." Its thought-arousing chapters travel in unaccustomed ways and its last chapter burns like a flame as it wrestles with the strange grip that in these days Jesus is getting on the hearts of men. He sees Christ demanding of us a "choice between the glory of reason, patience and love, and the glory of war, wrath and fear." "The strong man is asserting his rights, but his hand trembles and he is not sure." "That strange man on the Cross worries him, he is uncomfortable about Christ." "Just as he is going to strike, a hand is laid on his arm." "We dare not do wrong thoroughly." "He hangs there on His cosmic Cross, terrible as an army with banners, because He bleeds, bleeds in the slums, and in the unemployed, bleeds in the little children crammed into the mills of India, China and Japan, bleeds in the subject races made into instruments of gain, bleeds in the memory of our 'glorious dead,' in Jack and Edward who went out to fight for Freedom, Honor and Peace, and are waiting for them still. . . . Just when we are going to assert our proper rights, and claim our own position, He comes and looks at us, and asks us awkward questions as to whether our rights are right, and whether we have any position. He is dangerous. He takes the fight out of a man. . . . He is going to drive us to a decision with His wounded hands. He will not let us have His world for a playground, a battlefield, a factory, or an Empire any longer. We must give it to Him. We must give

it to Him or—or there will be darkness over all the earth from the sixth hour until the ninth—and that may be a thousand years."

That is an English churchman, chaplain to the King. And from the other end of the line there comes the voice of an heretical Irishman, striking the same note. In his introduction to "Androcles and the Lion," George Bernard Shaw writes, "Though we crucified Christ on a stick, he managed somehow to get hold of the right end of it. . . . If we were better men we might try his plan." "I am no more a Christian than Pilate was . . . yet I see no way out of the world's misery but the way which would have been found by Christ's will." That from George Bernard Shaw! "And suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves." And as of old, so now, it is well to have it so.

III

As this problem is more recent and so seems more intimate than the first I mentioned, a third often seems yet more intimate. I mean the problem of human nature. Two major ranges of facts influence most of us here. One is connected with the war. The mere fact of the war, the mere fact that after all these years, after all these Christian centuries, the nations should so fall upon one another—it is the amazement of the East and has gone far to shatter all our Occidental boastings of superiority, and it is more and more becoming

the amazement and disheartening of the West. The things that were done in the war, as barbaric as warfare ever showed and which we can no longer confine to any one or two nations because calmer study has shown how far all participants were daubed with the same brush, both the physical atrocities and the equally terrible moral atrocities of lying and misrepresentation—what sensitive man is able to contemplate any of these things without being tempted to think more cheaply of human nature, of its common sense and its integrity?

The second range of influential facts is not unconnected with the first. It is the prominence into which crime is pushed, both by its prevalence and by its reporters. Newspapers plead sober justification for the report of crime on the ground that it is important. And then the newspapers do more than that. They rail against crime in the editorial columns that few read and in the news columns read by the many they roll it under the tongue, dress it up in every phrase and hint and innuendo to make it picturesque and alluring and they even picture it in cartoons that once were supposed to be wholesomely funny. Faith in human nature—where will a man get help for that?

Often the final stage in this mood of despair so common in our time comes through some personal experience—a friend who has cooled, a helper who has betrayed you, a lover who has proved unworthy, a leader in church or state who is revealed as venal or immoral. So the view con-

tracts, the glory fades. As one man put it, man becomes but a "fretful midget," and the human race itself as a "trouble of ants in the gleam of a million, million suns." Idealism dies. The heart turns back upon itself and turns sick. All the springs of service and altruism and affection one by one run dry.

Even in such a mood something is left. "And suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves." If ever this mood is on any one of you I beg of you remember that. Draw near to One who was tempted in all points like as we are, but who came through clean. See him assailed by fiercer forces than ever smote you and me. Contrast his character and his fortune until all the injustices that you and I have ever experienced look pale and pleasant in comparison. Hear one of his three best friends vow to go with him to the death and then deny him. See one of his twelve best friends betray him. Watch the rabble that acclaims him with the opening week and howls, "Crucify him," on Friday. Behold him who never did anything but good to any man with the spittle of a frenzied soldier running down his face, and amid jeers agonizing to death on a gibbet, and remember that no fault was ever found in him. And remember that he believed in men and in God, believed men could repent beside him on the Cross, that his very executioners were not so bad as they appeared, and believed that God would be victor in the end. Oh, the optimism

and the faith of Jesus! Suddenly looking round about we see no one any more save Jesus only, but at that Great Heart we light the torches of our faith and hope again, of our service, our altruism and affection.

He is re-shaping the thinking of the world. He shall turn even the nations from force and wrath and fear to reason and patience and love. He is the flame of our optimism and makes our trust in human nature logical. And may I suggest his equal power when we are too weary to be interested in the sweep of religious thought, too private for any large affairs, too individual to think much about our fellows? Here the parallel between our experience and that of Peter, James and John is perhaps closer than anything that I have yet named.

Your plans are blasted or postponed. You thought you were moving in a manner large and free. You find you are only like the caged squirrel, busily spinning its cage, but getting nowhere and accomplishing nothing. All your spiritual experience has turned thin and empty. Things once gloriously real are so no more. Moses and Elijah and the cloud of the Divine Presence have all departed and voices from above no more reach you. Or a veil drops between you and your fellows. Many press about you, but significant human contacts you make with none. Voices from the real world come to you but faintly, distantly, as from an invisible and far-off broadcasting station. Suddenly looking round about

you see no one any more save Jesus only. From the mountain top you are called now to walk down, down, down, but on that descent he walks with you. Listen to his voice! Do what he says! Walk in his footsteps! In the discouragement and impatience of the valley, in its spiritual coldness and its shade, in the loneliness of its confinement, there are things to be learned from him and about him that are to be learned nowhere else. And there is always another mountain of transfiguration waiting across the valley into which you go with him.

II: EXPECTATIONS

Luke 3: 15. "The people were in expectation."

THIS verse ushers us immediately into the presence of the Hebrew Messianic hope. That hope—unconquerable, buffeted, denied, again and again postponed, but never destroyed—is not the least of the greatnesses of this remarkable people. From the day when Abram left Ur of the Chaldees, going out not knowing whither he went but sure Jehovah was calling him to better things, through the slavery in Egypt, the wilderness wanderings, the slow conquest of Canaan, the domination of Assyria, the exile in Babylon, the Roman dominion, the dispersion to the ends of the earth, down to the Zionist movements of the present hour, no sentence more universally and constantly is true of the Hebrew race than, "The people were in expectation." For hopefulness—pathetic, persistent, heroic—no other history has yet been written for one moment to be compared with the history of the Jews.

In this, however, they are but supreme exponents of what is true of humankind in general. Cynical resignation is never the mark of men when they are most truly men. We are never so ill off and seldom so well off that we do not picture a better state. We believe it possible and reach out toward it. Whether we interpret this

as a perverse restlessness or as a divine urge and homesickness after God, it is in either case the spring of no one knows how much of human progress. The reaching after beauty, truth, and goodness, the reaching after mastery over nature, better government, a more perfect society, even our reaching after God, are all expressions of the ineradicable expectancy so strangely written in the heart of man.

I think that this expectant mood marks our own time in a peculiar way and that it has two main sources. One source is the speed of the modern movement. I now have no reference to ocean greyhounds compared with sailing ships, to automobiles compared with horses, to trains compared with stagecoaches, to aeroplanes compared with Shank's mare, or radio compared with mail or messenger. I mean rather the rate of change in modern life. There are men living who have seen more transforming inventions in their lifetime than any thousand years ever saw before, more fundamentally transforming new ideas in their generation than any three generations ever saw before. Moreover most of these changes have worked mightily to transform the quality of our living. Space and time shrivel like snowballs in a volcano. Physically, commercially, politically, intellectually, religiously, we are nearer to people at the antipodes than our grandfathers were to those across the next river or mountain range. All this begets expectation. We feel we are going somewhere. The movement is so massive that it

looks significant. So great a migration must have a great destination.

The other root of our expectant mood is of quite a different sort, and of a sort that has more often been influential in history. That second root is disgust. As the disgust of the Hebrews heightened their hopes to return from Babylon to Jerusalem, as the disgust of the Jews made them look forward to the time when Rome would be humbled in the dust, so our disgust is putting us in the mood of expectation. There is the disgust with war. There is the disgust that with the world richer than it has ever been before so many millions are still submerged in poverty. There is the disgust that with so much beautiful work to be done men are so commonly slothful and pleasure-seeking. There is the disgust that government is so often the tool of privilege and denies equal opportunity to its subjects. There is the disgust with the prevalence of crime. There is disgust that we so often win riches but miss wealth, gain pleasures but not happiness, attain success but get no love. These wholesome disgusts sometimes move us to despair, but more often, against a background of a natural optimism, they put us in the mood of expectation, a mood so beautiful, so significant, so characteristic, that one finds it hard not to dwell on it too long.

But it is time to point out two forms or tendencies in this expectancy that lies upon the world. Most people assume that the trouble with our present state is something outside of us. We need

to have something done for us. Change our environment and all will be well. But there are others who answer, "We used to think that way, but we know better now. The trouble is inside of us. The need is that something be done *in* us. Nothing will be much better until we ourselves are changed." And it is significant that it is precisely the more thoughtful and experienced men who tend most strongly to this second view.

I

Go to the Bible, that great treasure house of the spiritual experience of the race. Again and again we find there these two streams of expectation coming into conflict and the second one always winning against the first. Recall how it was with Israel during the Babylonian exile. Here was Israel far from its home, restrained in all its life and movement, exploited and affronted. The first note of hope is sounded when Cyrus the Persian begins to appear above the political horizon. Then it is that the great cry goes up, "Comfort ye. Comfort ye, my people. Speak ye woo-ingly to the heart of Jerusalem and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished." Some keen man foresaw the rise of this young prince to world power, saw him coming at last against Babylon the hateful and hauling her from her throne to sit henceforth in the dust and so inaugurating a new political era with new liberty and opportunity for the restoration of the exiles of

Israel. But hardly had these hopes been proclaimed, hardly had the voice spoken of these expectations of help coming from outside, of something done for the Israelite, of a new and changed lot, than another and quite different strain appears. The figure of Cyrus retreats in the thinking of the prophet. The haunting figure of a suffering servant begins to take its place. As George Adam Smith has eloquently pointed out, Cyrus was the tool of God. The suffering servant is a character. The world conqueror, who crushes kingdoms with his armies, gives way to one who does not advertise himself in the street, who is despised and rejected of men, who is bruised and slain, who does not fit into the philosophy of kings at all so that all that they can do is to shut their mouths in startled silence at his marred visage but who, through his willing agony for others, makes many righteous. This transcending of the hope for an earthly conqueror—though it be Cyrus the Great himself—by the expectation of one who at infinite self-cost shall do something more *in* us than *for* us, transforming our souls rather than our circumstances—this is one of the most remarkable chapters in all the Old Testament records.

Come now to the New Testament. At its very start these same two strains of hope are found in contrast and in conflict. "The people were in expectation." But for what? The high vision of the exilic prophet has not yet claimed the populace and much less the aristocracy. Contempo-

rary literature helps make it clear that the popular expectation was of a quite different kind. No wonder Jerusalem hated Rome. No wonder that Israel transferred her old hatred of the city on the Tigris to the city on the Tiber. The flaming passion of the book of the Revelation actually calls Rome by the name of Babylon. But popular thought knows nothing better for which to hope than a mere reversal of position. There is nothing that the modern Babylon has done to Jerusalem that Jerusalem is not thirsting to do to Rome. The dearest hope of David's city is for some new and mightier Judas Maccabæus to reorganize the world with Jerusalem on top.

II

That is the key to a fuller understanding of the temptation of Jesus. From the baptism Jesus went into that experience full of a sense of destiny, humbly and reverently aware that he was meant for the greatest things of God. But what were the greatest things of God? The voice of the nation speaks in his patriot heart. That voice calls for a Jewish Cyrus to do for the Jews what Cyrus had done for the Persians and to do it in Cyrus' way; to be, like a prince, far above all concern with bread; to be, like a prince, as spectacular as one who can leap from the pinnacle of the temple into the street and take no hurt; to be, like a prince, unscrupulous of everything except those things that will bring submission from all

the kingdoms of the earth and the glory of them. But because there is in him a higher expectation, Jesus puts these things one by one aside. Like the common people at Nazareth, he will eat bread in the sweat of his own brow. He will win his place, not by the spectacular, but by the force of character and spirit. His will be a moral kingdom or he will have none at all. So step by step he marvelously fulfills the picture the seer of the exile had beheld. At first he seems to do little *for* men, but he does much *in* men. At first he transforms but little of their lot, but he transforms them. He uses none of the instruments of government, but all the instruments of character. Babylon is now a desolate heap. The Rome of Jesus' day is but a troubled memory. But the power of Jesus is marching through the higher life of the world.

Come down a little further in the New Testament. Read the drama of Saul of Tarsus. He inherited a religion incredibly externalized. Law was its great word. He went out to meet that law with all the earnestness of a great nature. He became a Pharisee of Pharisees. He struggled to obey, struggled as few have ever done, and with a moral grandeur that marks him as one of the heroes of the earth. But presently he could no more be the kind of Pharisee against whom Jesus protested. He could not be content to have the outside of the cup and the platter clean if the inside was filthy, to be as the whited sepulchers that inwardly are full of dead men's bones. The very commandment not to covet set his human

nature to thinking of things to covet. The issue of life was not adequately dealt with by law. The need was for character. It was the hope of that that set the stage for the swift and marvelous transformation which began on the Damascus road when he became aware that Jesus had not failed or been defeated, but was victor over death and sin. Christ did more than do something *for* Paul. He did something *in* Paul. He did more than change Paul's lot. He changed his character.

III

But with all these demonstrations as to which form of expectation is the greater—and many others that we might name—the two strains of hope are still among us in places great and small. Both strains are in national affairs. They are written there in large and tragic ways. As it seemed enough for the Jews to see the imperialism of Rome moved to Jerusalem, so it seems enough to many moderns to have the seat of imperialism transferred from Berlin to Paris, and many others use the same formula, only for Paris they substitute the capital of their own love. Institutions have their place. They may release good will. They may nurture it. They may even create it. But is there anything clearer in the world to-day than the demonstration Europe is giving that the League and the Court and the Locarno treaties are not enough? We may be-

lieve in every one of them, but who can any longer think that they are enough, or that any outward change is enough? Who can think any longer that the main trouble is outside of us, and not within us, that our need is that something be done *for* us rather than that something done *in* us, that our need is so much for a transformation of institutions as it is for a transformation of souls? It is because men are seeing this that the outlawry of war is increasingly popular. It comes nearer to the heart of the matter. I may happen to believe in League and Court and Locarno treaties all together, and I must believe in the outlawry of war yet more. But, oh, for something deeper! Oh, for a new inner character in the governments of earth. To work steadily for that is the high function of the Church.

The social stresses of the day tell the same story. On the one side are the "haves," on the other side are the "have-nots," on the one side the over-privileged and on the other the under-privileged, on the one side the employers and on the other the employed. One side cries, "Consolidate and unfetter our power and civilization is safe." The other answers, "Transfer all power to us. Give us the dictatorship of the proletariat and paradise is come." And both are wrong, for both move on the lower planes of hope and expectation. We need a different organization of men, but no different organization of men will much improve us without a different kind of men to organize. Without that, no social scheme will work

but badly. Here again the Church stands at the very center of the problem.

Nor can we leave the church out of the reckoning in another way. I believe in church unity. I believe with Bishop Brent that there are to-day two things supremely worth living for and dying for—a new international order and the unity of the Christian church. And yet if to-day we could sweep all the different organizations into one great denomination, the greater thing would still be waiting to be done. That greater thing is the building of a new race of Christians purified from denominational imperialism, cleansed of that ideal of church unity that on examination turns out to mean the absorption of all other denominations into mine, a race of Christians tolerant enough to know it is well to have many views of truth, wise enough to know that diversity often means wealth and strength, Christian enough to love men more than forms and polities.

So whether we think of the best vision of the Old Testament, or of the mind of Jesus, or of the experience of Paul, or of the political, social and ecclesiastical world of the present hour, we steadily move toward a fresh emphasis on Christ. For the last hundred years scholarship has been busy with him as with no other. It has done all sorts of things to the record, but it all has had one single issue. His character stands out as never in the past. It judges government, society, churches and men. It is the one adequate hope

of the world. In its vital contagion, it must be our expectation.

This comes home to every one of us. There is a sublime democracy of character. Character is open to all men on more nearly equal terms than anything else, and character is the ultimate need of the world. You cannot be Cyrus the Persian, you cannot be King, or Pope, or Emperor, but these are comparatively useless things to be. You can be a character. That is the hope of the world. There our expectation must center. This is something that nothing can deny to any man, no obscurity, no worldly impotence, no adverse lot. For more men, women and youth constantly exposing themselves to the transforming power of Jesus, honestly sharing and expressing that character—this is the only worthy expectation in the world and to fulfill that expectation is the only worthy service to the world. That means you and me.

III: THE LOST HEROISM OF CHRISTIANITY

Ephesians 6: 12. "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."

IT is a common saying that there is something the matter with religion. It is a profound lie or a profound truth according to what we mean by religion. There is nothing the matter with religion in itself. In the profound disillusionment of these years there are more and greater voices praising it than ever in the past. Even Bernard Shaw has joined the chorus. If you can conceive anything higher, deeper, broader than Christianity, anything nobler, profounder, more fertile and salutary, you are at liberty to go and make it. There is such a thing as finality even in a world of change. There is something final in Homer, in Dante, in Shakespeare. Christianity's view of God as Father, of man as child, of love as the way of life, and the character of Jesus that shows all these things in operation are final. We neither know nor dream of anything better. There is nothing wrong with religion.

There is something wrong with religion. For we have to think of it not only as it is in itself. We have to think of it in its expression. The rarest thing in the universe waits on the intellect and the

will of men for its utterance. We have to look at the institutions and the persons that represent it. We have to ask how far it gets itself incarnated, how far it fulfills its promise. Then we arrive at the profound truth that there is something wrong with religion. A civilization trembling in the grip of forces that it has set loose but not found how to handle says through a multitude of its greatest voices that our supreme need is for Christianity. And yet that civilization still stumbles on its way and somehow does not find how to adopt Christianity. Institutions named with the name above every other name falter, hesitate, fail of their mission and their promise. The religion that ought to sweep the world seems often to be doing nothing but fighting a perilous rearguard engagement. And why? The question is a big one. It would need much analysis and wide vision to answer it completely. But I want to-day to voice one of my deep convictions. One of the worst things about the present state of religion is its loss of heroism.

I

Paul was a hero of the faith. If you don't believe it, read the eleventh chapter of Second Corinthians. Those first Christian years were full of heroes. They were red with battle and vibrant with its shoutings. We look back upon those days as upon the romantic age of faith. Where else will you find anything like those days

when not many of the wise and mighty were called but when plain men and women through their heroism brought a new religion out of the villages of Galilee and the catacombs of Rome to conquer all of Europe. But when Constantine made Christianity official all this seemed to be changed. The winds that had been blowing against the new faith now blew with it. Since then there have been times not a few when religion has seemed more a thing of cowardice than of courage, more a thing of fear than of heroism, more a means of escape than a call to battle, more a retreat than a victory. When you come on a company of twentieth century Christians how different do they seem from those described in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews? Do they ever impress you as being any more heroic than anybody else?

But before we blame our times for the relative colorlessness of Christianity let us get back to Paul again. Here he is writing a circular letter to a number of churches and to the church at Ephesus among the rest. He is coming to the most robust and militant passage in that letter. "Finally, brethren, put on the whole armor of God." But here there is no mention of those obstacles that fill Second Corinthians and the eleventh of Hebrews. Instead he sweeps them all aside. He mentions none of the things which we most commonly think of as having made the early Christian years heroic. Instead he cries, "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood,

but against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."

II

Let us say it frankly. We are misreading the facts and deceiving ourselves when we lay the colorlessness of present day religious life to the times. That is an alibi as unreal as it is cheap. If Paul was heroic and we are anything but heroic, it is not at all because in his day Christianity was proscribed and now it is on the throne. It is because he and his times were thorough about religion and we are not. It is because he came to heroic grips with the enemies that assail us as much as they assailed him, but we do not.

His first great battlefield was himself. Here was the birthplace of all his heroism. Go back to the seventh and eighth chapters of his letter to the Romans. There you find no drifter, no willing slave of chance desire. There you find a great soul doing lonely battle, gasping as in the throes of death, setting great purposes before him and throwing himself towards their fulfillment with all the courage of a reckless cavalry charge.

Truly the fact that Christianity ascended the throne in the time of Constantine does not eliminate this call to heroism. Every discrepancy between what we dream of being and what we are, between what we ought to do and what we habitually do do, is evidence here. I heard one saying that he was more afraid to live than he was afraid

to die. Really to face yourself, really to look keenly at your faults and failures, really to decide by the eternal God that you never, never, never will make peace with them, really to live a life that insists on being self-directed in the face of all these enemies, is our call to heroism as it was the call of Saint Paul. And just insofar as this fight is lonely, unnoticed by the public, unapplauded by any audience, a fight ununiformed and unpraised, by just so much is it the more heroic.

Tempting as it is to go into particulars at this point, I must for the most part leave that exercise to you. Yet two illustrations cannot be easily passed. Why is it that in most of our free and favored communities there is so much failure to honor the public worship of God? In innumerable conversations upon this subject with non-church goers it has been the rarest thing in the world for them not at some point in the conversation to volunteer the statement, "I know I ought to go to church more than I do." Then why do they not go? The reasons volunteered are legion, but, after deducting a small percentage that God himself must honor, reasons that have to do with health, or the care of the sick, or the rearing of children, about all the rest boil down to nothing in the world but the lack of this kind of courage that Paul had. We are drifting. We are the willing slaves of chance desire. We are trying to make peace with what we know to be wrong. We are not heroic and self-directing. We say, "We ought." Then the way we deliberately plan our

exercise or the luxury of another half hour of dozing or the personal preference for one kind of a dinner over another, chases us from the field of moral battle utterly defeated.

Or take the matter of religious conversation. Its practice is a vast part of the power of every great religious movement. Of course I do not mean pretentious sanctimoniousness. I mean the honest, frank, natural mention of Christian things and witness to their preciousness. Jesus had no cathedral in which to preach. Paul was chased from almost every synagogue he entered. Far and away the greater part of the work of each was religious conversation at meetings that seemed to be by chance. How often do we think, "Some one ought to speak to that man about the church," "Some one ought to call and carry the Christian fellowship of this community into that home," "There is a place where some one ought to suggest church membership," "Some one ought to speak to that man about Jesus' way of life." But how often we refuse to face the thought, "I am the one to do it." The absence of religious conversation, the spiritual silence of our cultured communities, the thousand things that we would rather do than say the simple words, "I believe in the Church," or, "I am a Christian and I wish you were"—how will you explain these things? In eighty percent of the cases the explanation is plain cowardice. "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the spiritual

hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." But we have lost our nerve.

III

We already have one foot in another field of Christian heroism that belonged to Paul but to Paul no more truly than to ourselves. You have to fight yourself. You also have to fight your neighbors, often your friends. The mob is the arch terrorizer of Christians as it is of all idealists. We are called not only to say, "I will be true to my vision in spite of all the powers of darkness in myself." We are also called to say, "I will be true to my vision in spite of the society in which I live." That took courage with Paul. It meant ostracism from church and family and friends. That takes courage still. I offer you an experiment. This afternoon take out your ideals and look at them. If they are dusty from disuse, polish them up a bit. Then say, "I will be genial and uncensorious, but I am not henceforth going to do anything I count wrong just because it is the social practice of my set. I will not again omit anything because it is not done by those about me. The smiles and jibes and chilliness that I may meet in this course shall mean nothing to me beside the behest of my own humble, Christian conscience. I will seem as good as I am." Does that appear attractive to you? If not, the very measure of its unattractiveness is one measure of your call to an heroic Christian life.

It is not only with humor that I often think of the reply of a newcomer in this community. When asked how he liked it he said, "It is great if you can live through it." It is not only with humor that I think of that but with sadness, for in it I hear the voice of a crowd-driven life. Our very smiling at it proves how close we all are to it. What room there is among us for the high words of Peter when he was pursued by the official mob, "We must obey God rather than men!" That is heroism.

IV

Time will let me speak of but one other way in which we, like Paul, are called to the heroic life. Paul universalized his experience. He dared to assert to himself and then to the world that his genuine religious experience was capable of having meaning for others and indicated something of the total meaning of life.

That is a call and an heroic call. It is on our age as it was on his. It suits the timorous spirit to keep the religious experience or discovery cooped up, guarded and protected. It is the part of courage to say, "This must be shared. This must be carried out into the open, offered, even insisted upon." Paul had a profound religious experience on the Damascus road and through his years in Arabia. He never insisted that the experience of any other man should take just the form of his, but he said at once, "This blessing

does not come to me because God is playing favorites. It is meant for all." All his heroic missionary life grew out of this attitude.

Your religious experience is not meant to be kept in a corner, housed tight as a secret while you pass through the throng. Have you found forgiveness, the relinking of your poor life with the great life of God in spite of your iniquity? All about you there are countless silent sufferers needing and longing to share that experience. Have you discovered the divine fellowship that can steady you in the midst of all the tumult of the world? The lonely storm-tossed lives of your friends and neighbors need just what you have gotten. Has your poor heart been chastened, renovated, inspired by the indwelling spirit of the Christ? There is no heart in which he cannot do all that he has done for you and no heart that does not need that above all else.

Nor is this all. The Christian way of life that is so admirable in small areas is meant also for the large, that is so worthy among little groups is meant also for the greater, that is so fine in some of the contacts of life is meant for all the contacts of humanity. The cowardly Christian is content to chop life into little fragments and say that the ethics of Jesus belongs to some, but has no meaning for the others. The heroic Christian universalizes his religion. There is no more romantic and heroic work on earth than the work of the men who are doing that. The spirit of service above self that makes your home a para-

dise is meant for every nook and corner of the business and industrial world. The peaceable and gentlemanly standards that you obey in all your intercourse with your neighbors are meant also for every intercourse of government. The world waits for men who are brave enough to act upon the vision that what is wrong for individuals cannot be right for nations and what is right for individuals can never be wrong for nations. Here is all the standing room that any man can ask for the living of an heroic life. Against all the inertia of our commercial, social, economic, political and racial partisanships, against all the greed and selfish sloth that lead us to worship things as they are without even so much as asking if they are as Christ would have them, each Christian is to-day summoned to a crusade that will make him as heroic a figure as was Saint Paul.

There is something the matter with religion. There will be something the matter with religion until, like Paul, we recognize ourselves as our first battlefield, we put conscience above the crowd, we universalize our spiritual experience and spiritual ideals. "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." The trouble is that we have lost our nerve.

IV: THE SURPASSING ADVANTAGE OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

Matthew 19: 27. "Then answered Peter and said unto him, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee; what then shall we have?"

NO doubt here as elsewhere, Peter acted as the spokesman of the Twelve. These men had set out to be Christians. They found it a very great undertaking. Now they paused a moment to ask if it were really worth while. They were making the effort. They wanted to know wherein it would advantage them. "Then answered Peter and said unto him, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee; what then shall we have?"

In just what spirit this question was asked we may not be able to determine. It is clear enough that in its earlier stages the apostles' devotion to their Lord was by no means free from selfish elements. It is equally clear that before the New Testament was finished the apostolic devotion to Jesus Christ became so pure and noble as to be the foundation of all that is best in the subsequent history of the world. Peter asked his question while this development was still in progress, and we may not measure accurately how far it had gone. But these companions of our Lord had already advanced too far in nobleness for me to believe that they asked the question in the sordid

sense that often is assumed. Nor is there anything in the question itself to shut us up to that damaging conclusion. Life is a precious gift and we are careless and irreverent in our use of it if we are willing to give it all in any one direction without taking every means of finding out whether in so doing we do well. Here were men who had left all to follow one. They had the right to ask, and Jesus recognized that they had the right to know, whether in so doing they were moving toward a larger and more abundant life. The question that in its wording sometimes has a sordid sound may in its purpose have been nothing but an effort to enter more deeply into the priceless wealth of the Christian life, both that the questioners might be more confident in their own faith and that they might be more aggressive in recommending their faith to other lives.

With such high purposes I wish the question were more often asked. How many Christians do we meet who are pitiably apologetic about their religion! They blush a little when they are called religious, or if they call themselves religious they do so as if mentioning some amiable fad of theirs, or even an amiable weakness, for which they crave the patient indulgence of a good-natured world. They are very far indeed from sharing Jesus' view of religion as so precious that a man had better be blind and crippled than go without it. Nor does the trouble end here. Lives so holding to religion are but a poor recommendation of religion to the world. So long as religion asks noth-

ing but patience and pity it will not get anything more and is not really worthy of that. But when religion so fills a life as to become that life's quiet pride and to summon other men to give to it not their patience or their pity but their selves and their everything—as it did in the life and on the lips of Jesus—why, then the religion of one man can make a nation pause! It then were well for all of us who have committed ourselves to the religious life to stop, not once but often, as we go along the road and ask, "What then shall we have," both that we may enter more deeply and more gladly into our great heritage and that we may more worthily commend it to a world that needs it very sorely.

I

Comparing then the religious with every other sort of life, can we see any advantage belonging altogether to the former? Meeting men who have attained to a sane and mature religious experience and then meeting folk who are irreligious or who, though seeking to do the right, are yet indifferent to religion, what can we see to make us think religion a great advantage?

First of all, notice the experience of companionship that belongs to the religious life. Undoubtedly there are types of companionship that are not good for us, and there are other sorts of which we can easily have too much. A life lived nowhere but in the pressure of the throng so often wears

thin and runs shallow. And yet the highest use of solitude itself is for companionship. It is well often to withdraw from contact with the multitude. It is better when that retreat is into the deeper society of friends. It is well sometimes even to close your door upon your friends. It is best when that is but a step into a dearer intercourse in the paradise of home. At times even the fellowship of home may fail us. Changes come. Distances are cruel. The best service to our own may require that for the moment we stand quite by ourselves. But then to be all alone is to suffer defeat at our best. Then, after retreating through concentric circles in upon the very core of life, to find there void and only void—that is tragedy indeed. But happy is he who in the silence of his loneliness knows the touch of One whom time and distance cannot rule and who abides while all else changes. Happy is he who out of this secret experience of the soul can carry with him back into the pressure of the world a sense of quiet fellowship that ennobles and unites all the other precious companionships of life.

And what gives a man this experience of a fundamental companionship if it is not religion? Or, to put it more accurately, what is this experience if it is not itself religion? There may be something here that we cannot altogether explain or even well describe. But it is an incontestable fact that into the religious life there comes an experience of fellowship not to be found outside of it. Somehow there steals upon the soul the

great awareness of the presence of an invisible One who is good and who is friendly to us and in this fellowship all the other precious fellowships of life are strengthened and ennobled and every day some glad new friend is found. Why! there are some Christian folk I cannot meet without feeling I have met the whole army of Christ throughout the world, so greatly has religion enriched their lives with fellowship! There are some Christian folk who make me know, really know, that God Himself is here, so rich and present is their fellowship with Him! So was it with Jesus who on the lonely mountain found Moses and Elijah near. So was it with Jesus who could win even the victory of the cross because in all the desertion and ignominy of that hour he could say, "Father." And that is better, far better, than to be alone and know only an emptiness at the core of things.

II

Close to the advantage of a companionship that distinguished the religious life from every other, there lies the advantage of a comfort such as nothing else can give. The religious life is preeminently the happy life. It is likely to need less of comfort than any other. The way of the transgressor is the hard way. Ask skilled educators the chief cause of human ignorance. Ask social workers the chief cause of poverty. Ask your physician the chief cause of the physical weak-

ness and suffering that keep him busy and crowd our hospitals. Every day these students of human trouble are finding new means of proving to us that the way of the transgressor is the hard way and the chief problem in human happiness is the problem of righteousness. And yet we do not accept, Jesus did not accept, that simple theory of life that traces every form of suffering and pain to some wrong-doing on the part of the sufferer. Granted that the life made righteous by religion will thereby be saved much of suffering and stand the less in need of comfort, there are yet very many forms of suffering to which all sorts of men are liable,

> Into each life some rain must fall,
> Some days must be dark and dreary,

and when the sky is shrouded and the storm begins, then the advantage is with the religious man.

Religion does not cheapen suffering. It is no narcotic by which we may dodge life's pain. Perhaps by its refinement of our sensibilities it even increases our capacity to suffer. Nor does it, when it is as sane as Jesus was, attempt to deny the reality of trouble. But it does enlarge the sufferer. It does make him great enough to suffer and not be overcome. There are two ways of making a man's journey less burdensome. You may take part of his burden away from him. Or you may make the man himself so much stronger that he can walk off erect with the burden that used to crush him to the ground. Religion often

takes the former way. It brings us close to One who shares our burdens with us. But even more does it assist us by giving us power to bear the smart, and strength to carry the battle through.

Pity the man who when his money is gone feels that everything is gone. Pity him for his loss, if you will, but pity him most because in that loss he has shown that he is himself nothing but a thing of coin. If there had been religion in his life (and how gloriously some men are proving this) he would have known that all had not been lost—the integrity of a character worth more than anything ever sold in the markets of the world, the love of his real friends, the companionship and peace of God. Surely such a man is comforted in the day of loss. Pity the man who, when men's accustomed praise of him is silenced, feels that there is nothing else for which to live. Pity him just because he is sorry, if you will, but most because he has shown that he is himself so small as to be nothing but the pitiable sport of human flattery. If there had been religion in his life he would have lived not for the flattery of men but for the just approval of his God, and, having the latter, could still do without the former. Pity the man who when sickness and wounds afflict him can do nothing but cry and whimper in his agony and by his own self-pity multiply his own distresses. Pity him for the reality of his trouble, but most because his trouble has revealed his flesh as vacant of all soul. If there had been religion in his life there would have been moments when through his

suffering he felt a Father's hand and knew his pains were not meant for torturing but for his chastening. Pity the man who when he enters the valley of the shadow of death either for himself or for another can do nothing there but tremble and despair. Pity him just because of that trembling and despair, but most of all because he has failed to find that vista of unending expectation that religion, and nothing but religion, can certify to the soul of man and so has never yet begun to live after the power of an endless life. By making a man profound and strong and great, religion gives a man the inestimable advantage of a patient comfort. Therefore all the ultimate tragedies of the world could break across the defenseless life of Jesus, and under the deepest shadow of it all he could pray that his joy might be given to his dearest friends.

III

Again, religion is a necessary help to life in that it furnishes a necessary restraint. There are many perils in living. Some are forced upon us entirely from without, but most cannot touch us at all unless there is something inviting them within, and the worst of them come entirely from the inside. Nature or our fellow men may turn against us and slay our bodies, and that may be grievous. But that, the Master teaches us, is by no means to be so much feared as we should fear the evil tendencies springing from our own evil

hearts that have the power to slay the soul itself. Nothing the world and men can do to us can ever hurt us as we may be hurt by what we ourselves do. Here is the ultimate peril of life—that we consent unto the evil suggestions of our neighbors or the yet more insidious evil impulses of our own hearts, and do the thing that shall stain our souls, cripple our natures, and impoverish all our higher possibilities. We often need protection. Jesus often led his friends away from the pressure of the world. But the need of restraint is yet more intimate. You may protect a man to the limit of possibility. You may restrain the world from getting at him. But unless there is a restraint upon the man himself you are likely to have little repayment for your pains. This has been tried and proved in the monasteries. Men there were quite protected from the world, but if their own hearts were still unconquered, their life there soon proved quite as low as the life of the world that they had left.

So there is need of a restraint on life. Religion supplies it. Religion supplies it as nothing else can do. Yet it is not by the piling up of noisy and austere negatives that religion does this for us. Rather is it by the same method as that by which religion gives us comfort. Religion restrains us, not by making life small, but by making life great and sacred. Religion sets a man in relations so large and so important that he must perforce take heed how he behaves himself. It traces out for us the ways in which we are members one of another.

It reveals to us how any moral poison admitted to our lives becomes a peril and a weakening to the brothers at our side. It opens the gates of heaven and lets us hear a shout of celestial applause if ever we meet our antagonist with courage and give him quick defeat. It goes with us out into the night where we are on most lonely picket duty keeping the defenses of the soul against the foulest and most secret enemy, and in the very moment when we begin to think it would be easiest, and perhaps pleasantest, to yield, religion reminds us that our yielding would not be altogether our affair, but would mean also a hurt and disappointment in the heart of the Father God. Thus into the place where we think we are settling nothing but a question of our own pleasure, religion brings the great other-interests of humanity and God and bids us take them into the reckoning and so restrains us, even as Jesus said, "For their sakes I sanctify myself."

IV

But life needs something more. The great companionship and comfort and restraint of religion are not enough to live by. Life must also have some onward thrust, some great purpose, some high and challenging endeavor. In supplying this want religion has no monopoly, and yet religion supplies it better than anything else can. Men have been moved by many purposes that are quite outside of religion and that yet have been

altogether a credit to the race. But the high and challenging endeavor of the Christian faith is greater and therefore more satisfying and more ennobling than anything else. Where other purposes begin to hesitate and think to draw the line, religion marches right onward into a completeness and a universality outmatching everything else.

It is within the purpose of religion that every person everywhere shall be all that it is possible for him to be,—wise and beautiful and good. It is within the purpose of religion that all human relationships, domestic, social, economic, shall be all that it is possible for them to be—kind, considerate, unselfish, serviceable. It is within the purpose of religion that all the barriers that now separate man from man and clan from clan shall disappear till class no more strives against class and all the swords be beaten into plowshares and the nations do not learn war any more. It is within the purpose of religion that just the same spirit that rules your Christian home where the strong serve the weak and the rich help the poor and every gift and talent of every member is used for the joy and service of the whole, shall become the spirit not only of your home, not only of your street, not only of your city, not only of your nation, but the spirit of all men and women everywhere without one single soul left out. This is what religion is attempting, just this, literally this, not one thing less than this, and into this great endeavor it can lift and use your life. Is it good

and ennobling for a man to serve his country? Indeed it is, but it is even better and greater for him to follow the banner of the Christ. Is there anything in the counsels of the governments to measure up to this? If you want a statesmanship that is for many, you may go to the capitals of the Christian nations. If you want a statesmanship that is for humanity, go to the mission boards that religion has created.

A divine companionship, an adequate comfort, an indispensable restraint, the most ennobling and satisfying purpose—these all are held for us in our religion. Then God grant that we never again shall be ashamed of the religious life. Then God grant that we may enter so largely and sincerely into its surpassing advantage that not only by our words but by the whole demeanor of our souls we may commend it to a world that needs it very sorely.

V: THE LIFE THAT IS CHRIST

Philippians 1: 21. "To live is Christ."

ONE might search through all literature and not find another sentence expressing so much of the deep things of Saint Paul's soul. He wrote at the time when he had won the right to speak with some authority concerning life. He was an old man. He was suffering imprisonment. He was enjoying ample time for reflection. Moreover the life upon which he was now looking back had been a full life. His was no monotonous story, but one filled with swift, dramatic changes. His was no sequestered career, but one open to all the storms of public enterprise. Except in its unchanging sincerity and untiring quest for God, his was not a consistent history, but one full of sharpest contrasts and completest revolutions. No shallow, lazy creek rising in the flats to sink without a ripple into a nearby sea can tell us anything of Saint Paul's life. Rather must we go to the continental river, drawing meaning into itself from all mountains and plateaus, from all plains and valleys, now the crashing cataract of the wilderness, now the stately carrier of the commerce of great cities, being everything a river may be except shallow and slothful. Thus does Saint Paul's life run through the mid-years of

the first Christian century. Out of such a life he wants to tell us life's best meaning. "To live is Christ."

I

For Paul to think was Christ. Paul lived in a world whose humanity had exploded into fragments. Rome was indeed sole mistress of that world, maintaining political peace and governmental unity. But while uniting the world on one axis of its life she severed the world on many others. She sanctioned the contrast between bondman and freeman. The shifting distinction between sovereign and vassal she made permanent as between herself and every other race. In this, however, Rome was but doing what the Jewish race itself would have rejoiced to do. In things political Jerusalem might be forced to lick the hand of Rome, but all the time she did so her own heart was scorning Rome and the entire gentile world with a pride and sense of separateness that has never been equaled elsewhere. Nor was it any otherwise within the life of Judaism. The same spirit that led the circumcision to hold itself superior to the entire uncircumcision split the circumcision into a weary tangle of class and sect, Scribe and Pharisee, Priest and Levite, Sadducee, Zealot and Herodian.

But into this sect-ridden, pride-poisoned world the great lover of mankind had come, and as in this world he had gone about doing good, he had

bridged its every contrast and stepped across its every barrier. He had dined with the publican as readily as with the Pharisee. He had told redeeming truth to the degraded Samaritan woman whom he chanced to meet at the well as freely as to the powerful Hebrew gentleman who sought him out by night. He had answered the prayer of the Roman centurion as joyfully as the requests that came from his own fellow countrymen. He had loved men, not according to their loveliness, but according to their need. After giving his life in perfect service for men, he gave his life in death for men and just as much for the thief dying at his side as for the mother who wept beneath him. Thus had Jesus made it clear that the perfect and triumphant love—and the love of God can be nothing less than that—the perfect and triumphant love knows nothing of the petty favoritisms of men, but counts all men in, makes quest of all, gives itself for all in equal and ultimate self-sacrifice.

To this great truth Paul had yielded himself entirely. In the brilliant light that came from the life and death of Jesus he could no more think of any man as enemy or stranger. This Hebrew of Hebrews and Pharisee of Pharisees rebuilt his entire universe. He saw all lives illumined by the equal love of God. He read each life infinitely precious in the great family of God. There could be no more Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman. Each was brother bought with a price,

bought with the same price, brother for whom Christ died. For Paul to think was Christ.

Sometimes we meet a man like that to-day. He may be a wise man. He may be a rich man. But when you meet him you feel at once you have met something finer than wisdom or culture or office or wealth can give. You have met a heart as big as humanity. You cannot make that man a partisan. His thinking seeks something more than the triumph of capital over labor or of labor over capital. His thinking seeks something more than an organization of society wherein the terms of toil may be dictated altogether by those who foot the pay roll. His thinking seeks the good of both sides in this historic struggle that to-day is shaking the fabric of society. His clear logic will not use the name progress for the advance of any section of society that is gained at the expense of the degradation of any other. Apologies for the *status quo* cannot befog his thinking with sophistries about the greatest good of the greatest number. He will be content with nothing short of the greatest common good of all. He may wear no religious name, but for him to think is Christ.

II

For Paul to toil was Christ. Paul was essentially a missionary in the simplest and finest meaning of that term. To Paul truth was always truth and something more. From lesson it was always passing into command. Out of learning

he read a program. He could receive no true conception of life, however new, however startling, however at variance with the established order of things, and not at once feel himself commanded and sent to make that conception into reality. The light upon the Damascus road shone on a missionary of Judaism. It left him a Christian, but a missionary still. Seeing all men infinitely precious in the light of the equal love of God, he henceforth ignores the small partialities of men. He takes the nations on his heart. He moves among the despised, the weak, the foolish. The Hebrew who could be nothing but a Hebrew to Hebrews, the Pharisee who could be nothing but a Pharisee to Pharisees, becomes all things to all men if by any means he may gain some. As the point of the foil gathers into itself all the strength, all the skill, all the passion of the fencer, so all that Paul was and thought and felt Paul gathered into the one great effort of his life, the effort to make all men know and reflect the truth that Christ had taught him. He was still the scholar Gamaliel had made him, but now his learning was at the service of the Christ. He still could make tents, but now his trade was solely to make him efficient for the work of Christ. He kept his twofold citizenship in Benjamin and Rome, but now it was to enlarge his labors for the Christ. All the tremendous and tireless activity of Paul was Christ.

Sometimes we meet a life like that. It is not always a life professionally devoted to welfare

work. It often is a life immersed in more common things. It is a scholar busy with his books and papers, moving ever upward in the path to fame and vast authority, but counting this as nothing in his highest eagerness to get men close to Christ, who is the truth. It is an artist of the hand or voice, the brush, the chisel or the pen, truly loving beauty for its own sake, but really seeking above all else to lift the pleasures of the world into that harmony of beauty and virtue that Jesus brought. It is a homemaker diligent with a thousand household cares, toiling that comfort, beauty and plenty may abound beneath her roof, laughing with her children, but setting beyond it all and seeking through it all the one great goal of helping those who cross that threshold to be more like Christ. It is a physician earning a comfortable livelihood from the practice of his art, reaping the yet dearer recompense of the gratitude of a community, but really caring most for his opportunity to end suffering and restore health, because he pities as Christ pities. It is a lawyer fighting his cases well, rising steadily in the public eye, but caring most to bring peace and justice and brotherly affection out of the quarrelings of men till the family spirit, which is the spirit of the Christ, shall everywhere prevail. It is a merchant doing well in trade, but caring most to serve the public needs in a way to make life more effectual and beautiful, so to deal as to strengthen the world's ideals of honor and make business more kind and wholesome and more easily inhabited by Christ.

It is a financier growing rich as he leads men through untried paths to new successes and yet counting it not enough to give large portions of his wealth away, but in his business and through his business laboring to make business more considerate of the under dog, more careful of the widow and the orphan, more equable in the distribution of its successes and its failures till all men bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. For such folk, to toil is Christ.

III

For Paul to feel was Christ. His thought was Christ. From whatever point it started it pressed actively on toward him. His toil was Christ. Whatever outward form it bore, its conscious effort was toward him. So was it also with the great, mysterious, passive regions of his life that we gather under the name of feeling. These regions, not so subject to the will as thought, not so easily controlled as one's activity, these too were Christ.

Paul's pains were Christ. There had been many things in his life that most of us would call tragic, but they seem hardly to have ruffled him. Most men who had endured half the pains mentioned in the eleventh chapter of Second Corinthians would spend the remainder of their lives recounting their adventures to their fellows. Paul bore the prison and the stripes, the perils, the cold and the nakedness as uncomplainingly as

Jesus bore the scourging and the buffeting. But it was not because Paul could not suffer. It was because, like Jesus, he was suffering in ways so much deeper that all these surface things seemed trivial. Now he was in prison. Now he knew he was about to die. For the Christ the world did not long have any place. For him for whom to live was Christ it had place only a little longer. And yet Paul does not complain. Like the Christ who, coming in sight of the city of his death, wept not for himself but for it, like the Christ who on the *via dolorosa* turned and cried to the daughters of Jerusalem, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children," so in this letter written from under the shadow of his approaching death Paul's sole anxiety is for the churches, Paul's only grief is that he cannot help his fellowmen much longer. Paul's only tears are for the enemies of the cross of Christ. You could lash his body and he would not seem to feel it, but if you sinned against yourself you broke his heart. Once Paul summed it all up. He wrote, "I have been crucified with Christ." Thinking Christ and toiling Christ, he knew also the feelings of Christ. He had stood within the mystery of Calvary. He knew what it is to feel the burden and the pain of the sins of his brothers.

Sometimes we meet a man like that to-day. Though his heart is humble, he does not often have to blush for himself. But his cheeks are often hot and red because of the shame of others. He is not often anxious any more about his own soul. He left that with the God and Father of

his Savior, Jesus Christ, long ago, but he is often anxious for the souls of others. He is like Henry Drummond of whom one wrote, "I have heard many speak, but this one man, so anxious not to go to heaven alone, this one man I remember." He sees men grow angry and it pains him more than a blow in the face. He sees men steal and it costs him more than it costs those whose goods are plundered. He hears men lie and it hurts him more than it hurts the liars. He sees men sell themselves for money or station and grieves over that bad bargain as if it were all his own. He may be rich or poor, known or unknown, strong or puny. All that is leagues beneath the summits of his pain. His sufferings are Christ.

Paul's joy was Christ. You have not read the life of Jesus well unless you have felt its joy. Sometimes we talk of the joy of ease. Christ's joy was not that. Sometimes we talk of the joy of prosperity. By no accepted standard was Christ's that. Sometimes we talk of the joy of popularity. Christ's was only briefly that and always more than that. Sometimes we talk of the joy of obedience and sacrifice. Christ's was that and all that goes with that. His was the joy of being connected with a great enterprise, the greatest of all enterprises, even the bringing of all men home to God and the joy of knowing that in obedience to the will of God he was furthering the enterprise of God. His was the joy of sacrifice, the joy of living and dying for something beyond himself and dearer than himself. And with this obedience and sacrifice there went the deep, joyous sense

of the nearness of God, the sense that God was working in and through him and was taking his obedient and sacrificial life up into His own life where all is safe and all is triumph at the last.

Paul's joy was Christ—not ease but monumental toil, not prosperity but sickness and frequent want, not popularity but stonings and unnatural death,—and yet, through obedience and sacrifice, the higher joy of Christ. In his obedience to every heavenly vision he felt his life made part of the everlasting and glorious purposes of God. In his sacrifice he found himself escaping the carnal and the temporal and rising into the spiritual and the eternal. And with his obedience and sacrifice there stole upon him the sense of the abiding nearness of his God, taking even his imperfect life up into the perfect life, where all is safe and all is triumph at the last.

Sometimes we meet a man like that. His thought is Christ. His toil is Christ. His pain is Christ. How perplexed he seems. How heavily he toils. How bitterly, bitterly the world hurts him. Who would have a life like that? But you come nearer to him. Beneath the pain there is the calm the pleasure-seekers of the world have never found. Through that jarring struggle comes a chord of music resolving all the discords of the world. Beneath that sacrifice there is a peace that words cannot tell or thought measure, for it is the peace of God that passeth understanding, but that comes to him for whom to live is Christ.

VI: WINDOWS TOWARD JERUSALEM

Preached on the occasion of receiving thirty young people into the church.

Daniel 6: 10. "Now his windows were open in his chamber toward Jerusalem."

A GREAT many different kinds of literature go to make up our Bible. Jesus was the greatest story teller of all time. Where else will you find any stories that have so influenced the deeper life of the world as his narratives of the good Samaritan and the prodigal son? And if with its history, letters and direct teaching, the New Testament gives us these matchless stories from the lips of Jesus, we need not be surprised that with its histories and prophecies and poems, the Old Testament gives us such great stories as the book of Jonah and the book of Daniel.

If you will take out your Bibles in the American Revision and turn to this text you will find that it is printed in a parenthesis. It is an explanatory interruption of the story of Daniel. Read that story again and see how great it is. This Daniel was a hero. He was dwelling in a strange land. He was in the midst of a pagan people. He was among those who were hostile to him. His life was in constant danger. Everything he believed

and loved was insulted and denied by almost all his companions. But even in such circumstances he kept his head and his heart. He was kindly to those whom he could not like and to those who disagreed with him. He even served them well, as when he rescued the wise men, the enchanters, the magicians, the soothsayers from the wrath of the king. But he did all this humbly, giving God the glory. He looked on all the pride and greatness and seeming success of Babylon and boldly said that all these must pass away to make room for another and enduring kingdom. He became great and powerful, but through it all he remained the humble and loyal servant of God. He inspired other people to a loyalty like his own, as in the case of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, till they too bore a testimony to religion that startled court and city. He was courageous against the king himself, as when he interpreted the king's dream of the tree, for he knew that only righteousness exalts any people. When the decree went out that for thirty days no prayers should be made to any man or God, but only to the king, he went right on in his religious life, although it brought him to the den of lions. When his own people sinned more than he, he took their sins upon himself. He carried them on his own heart. He worked and prayed for their forgiveness and improvement. Even in little things such as food and drink—and you know how if you do not go with the crowd and customs of the times in such

things, men smile and jeer at you and call you queer—he consulted his conscience more than anything else, and he remained politely firm. This story, especially its first six chapters, is well worth any man's reading.

But I am not interested in this story to-day only because it is heroic. I am interested because I feel certain parallels between it and what is to be expected of many here. You, who have this day renewed your allegiance to the Christian church, and you, who for the first time have publicly acknowledged your discipleship to Jesus, are now in the midst of friends. The walls of a great fellowship are about you. You are in your spiritual home. This place is for you a sort of Jerusalem. But things will not always be this way. Some of you on leaving this building will go immediately to conditions that are far, far different. All of us before this week is out, will meet conditions of that kind. Beyond this week stretch other weeks and months and years and decades, and because our hearts and loves are with you, because our hopes and faith are with you, some of us in imagination are living your whole lives for you to-day. Dreams that we shall not fulfill we are passing on to you. Tasks that we are not able to finish we are glad to know that you will share. We see you to-day pledged, pledged as Daniel was pledged. The pledge is made in Jerusalem, but when you come to Babylon we are expecting of you the loyalty of Daniel.

I

Think of these parallels a little more in detail. Often you will be in a pagan crowd that is hostile to all your ideals. Everything that you believe and love will be insulted and denied. Then you must keep your head and keep your heart.

You will meet those whom you do not like. You will go to school with them, and live with them, and work with them, but you are not to condemn them. You are to serve them. You are to help even your enemies. That is what Christ asks of you. That is the way God's spirit comes into the world. And when you succeed you are to give God the glory.

Sometimes the pomps and glories of the world will crowd about you. Its standards of success will come in conflict with your Christian purposes. It will say to you, "Get rich first, by almost any means, and then you can give your money away." "Become popular first, even if you have to compromise your standards, and then you can patronize other people." "Get on the honor roll, even if you have to cheat a little." "Power, position, fame, these are the things that count." But you are to put another kingdom above all these things—the kingdom of honor, the kingdom of kindness, the kingdom of brotherly love and service. And you are to live in the faith that all governments, all armies, all businesses, all fames are to be made subject to this kingdom of God.

Some of you will become great and powerful.

But that is never to puff you up. Some of your names will be known far and near. But that is to be nothing to you beside your ambition to serve Christ and make his way of life prevail on earth. You are still to be humble and to bring everything to the service of God and of the Master.

You'll see men and women like Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego going into burning fiery furnaces for their Christian ideals; fighting hard battles against the greed and arrogance and neglect and pride that everywhere curse our world. You are to cheer such people. You are to help them. You are to throw your strength on their side. You are to remind them that no man ever does anything like that, without their drawing near to him Another One in the burning fiery furnace, whose form is like unto the Son of God.

When king and country forget that nothing but righteousness can ever exalt any people, you are to remember that. When the mob wants you to worship some man first, you are to worship God first. Yet when people sin, you are not to fret and scold and feel self-righteous and wrap the garments of your respectability about you and go by on the other side. You are to take their guilt and folly and shame as your guilt and folly and shame. You are to carry their burdens and lift their load, feeling no wrong on earth without feeling it as a family disgrace. Yes, even in the little things of food and drink and social custom you are to consult your Christian conscience above the standards of the crowd and remain

politely firm. It's a great task to which we Christians are committed.

II

It is a great task, but it is a task for which great resources are available. Often Daniel's friends must have wondered how he did it. Often his companions in exile must have wondered how he towered above them all. Often the courtiers and the wise men and the enchanters and the astrologers must have marveled at him. That is why our author has inserted this explanation. He interrupts his story with a parenthesis. "Now his windows were open in his chamber toward Jerusalem." Daniel was living in Babylon, but "his windows were open in his chamber toward Jerusalem." Day by day he went into his chamber where the windows were open toward Jerusalem. That is what we plead with you to do. It may be a chamber of wood or of brick. That chamber may be in the secret places of your heart. Go into it. Keep the windows open towards Jerusalem.

Much has happened in Jerusalem since Daniel yearned toward it. A new and richer religious movement than Daniel ever knew has gone forth from there. It has created a literature incomparably powerful and precious. That literature is reflected in all great literature, but it still stands alone in beauty and in power. It is better than the funnies in the newspapers. It is better than the

cheap magazines that crowd so many of our homes. It rises above even Browning and Shakespeare. It is music better than jazz or opera. Many a man has gone through the fires of temptation without so much as the smell of the smoke upon him, many a woman has borne suffering and not been broken, many a hero has done heroic things and not grown weary, till the world has wondered how they did it, and it was all because they constantly heard the music of this Book above all the roarings of the world, for their windows were open toward Jerusalem. Then learn the majesty of the Psalms. Listen to the idealism of the prophets. Ponder the words of Jesus. Hang the walls of your minds with pictures of him overcoming temptation, going about doing good, bearing as his burden the shame of his countrymen, for love's sake suffering all and everywhere revealing the Father as one who gives final victory to His own. Have this Book on your desk. Take it to college and to work. Keep this window open toward Jerusalem.

III

A new and richer practice of prayer began at Jerusalem and in the country of which it is the head. Men thought of prayer too exclusively as a public function. Jesus emphasized its privacy, telling us to go into our chambers where the windows are open toward Jerusalem, and shut the door. Men thought of prayer too exclusively as

confined to stately language and ornate ritual. Jesus made it as simple and intimate as the talk of any friend with his friend. Many men and women and youth have walked safe through the perils of Babylon, have remained serene among the vexations and impertinences of life, till the world has wondered how they did it, and it was all because this window was open toward Jerusalem. A wise man read what Jesus said about going into the closet and shutting the door and said he found his closet in his hat. Speak to Him, for He hears. He is nearer than hands and feet. He is closer than breathing. Get in the habit of talking things over with God—your temptations till He gives you strength, your sorrows till He gives you poise, your problems till He shows you the next step, your joys till He makes them safe. Doctors tell us that even window glass keeps from us the best part of the sunshine. Keep this window *open* toward Jerusalem.

IV

To many a Jew in Babylon, Jerusalem was but a memory. But to Daniel it was contemporary. It was to a contemporary Jerusalem that he kept his windows open. To many, Jesus is but a memory. To others and all who will have it so, he is contemporary. At Easter he came back to live with his friends forever. "Lo, I am with you alway." Nineteen centuries have not gone beyond him. He still walks just before us. He

walks through our political life. He walks through the clash of governments in war and diplomacy and trade. He walks through our courts of law, through our mills and stores and offices. He walks through our clubs and homes and schools. He walks through our hearts. You have heard how sailors used to wonder at the icebergs that went on their way supremely regardless of wind and wave and storm and surface currents. They found it was because seven-eighths of the iceberg is beneath the surface and so those bergs are lead by the deepest currents of the sea. Some lives are like that. Surface things do not control them. Storms do not dominate them. They go far, while the flotsam and jetsam of our common lives are hurried on the rocks.

You can be like that. Let him guide you. When all the voices of expediency and cheap, immediate gain are crying to you, listen to his directions. When spirits clash—and yours among them—ask what his spirit would suggest. "Follow the King, else wherefore born?" One hundred times a day is not too often to look into his face and say, "Lead on. I follow." Oh, the shipwrecks and the ruins, the follies, the weaknesses, the cowardices, the tasks declined, the lonelinesses and the futilities from which this would save us! Oh, the wisdoms, the powers, the fruitful victories, that this would give! We go to Babylon. But we are pledged to follow him. Keep the windows of your chambers open toward Jerusalem.

VII: THE STRATEGY OF PRESSURE

Matthew 11: 28. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

THERE are sayings of Christ that seem to belong to the critical and tragic hours of life and there are sayings that seem to belong to the common road and the everyday lot. But the more one lives and thinks, the former become less numerous and the latter more numerous. Life turns out to be more of a unity than we have thought and experience more of one piece. Crisis spreads through it all. Tragedy loses its isolation and penetrates everywhere. These things dwell no longer in the exceptional hours and the strange circumstances. Like the waves of the radio they are moving through everything. For my part, I used to think that this precious sentence was precious only for some people and at some times. It seemed to be something to live by and experience after we have worked ourselves almost to death, or when to the ordinary burdens of life, that seem quite enough, sudden great additional burdens have been added and the back is breaking. It is indeed adequate for all such hours, but it is far, far more than that. It belongs to the common road.

A haunting sense of futility overtakes us right in that common road. There is the immensity of

life. We moderns are called to live on a larger scale than any other generation before us. The bigness scares us. Every one knows how the horizons of life have expanded. Provincialism has largely passed away. Things that we used to do on a domestic scale we now do on a municipal scale, and things we used to do on a municipal scale we now do on a national or international scale. The immensity of world trade, the immensity of world banking, the immensity of world politics, the immensity of world cultural movements, all come and perch on our front door steps, or, rather, walk in our front doors and influence what goes on in every room in the house. The world seems to have gotten too big to be managed.

Moreover our involvement with this world is involuntary. Sometimes it "cramps our style" until we are desperately offended. Organization is a great method for accomplishing things, but it has a terrible way of making men into cogs and wheels. We are more and more finding our world and our lives prearranged for us. We are not our own. The state owns us. The machine compels us. Let a man go into business and he finds the way he must do business is largely settled for him in advance and that if he varies much from that way he will presently discover that he is not in business any more. The same thing happens if a man goes into journalism or law or medicine or politics, even in some cases if he goes into the Christian ministry.

I

Sometimes this involuntary involvement with our overgrown world bespatters our consciences and makes us yearn for a spiritual bath. I shall never forget how this was brought home to me several years ago. I had always disliked child labor and thought it a crime that in order to run our world men thought it necessary to exploit the limbs and lives of God's little children. Then I went to a meeting on the subject and an expert told us that there was not a single article of our clothing except some kind of glasses to which child labor had not contributed. It was only the doubtful privilege of wearing glasses that gave me the chance to name a single thing I had on that did not involve me as an unwilling beneficiary in this thing that I hated. I don't know how much the situation has improved since then. We may hate war, but if it comes, we are all involved whether we want to be or not in its causes, its prosecution and its result. We may hate the conduct of the average American prison, but as citizens we own those prisons and are involved. We may hate the iniquities and dishonesties of the tax system, but the government it supports is our government under which we live. Independence and innocence are both myths.

Along with these changes and discoveries there has come the almost infinite subdivision of work till for multitudes, I fear for most, the meaning of work has gone. You may have heard the story

of a man who was hunting for instances of exceptionally long continuous employment. He found one man who had worked forty years for a railroad. He asked him what he did. He said that when the trains came in he took a hammer and went around and hit every wheel on the train. He asked the laborer what he did it for. His answer was, "Blamed if I know." Of course the real answer was that he did it for the wage. The pay envelope was the only reason. The work in itself had no meaning. Of how much work is that true! But work like that is not free or hardly noble. It has no spontaneity. It provides no self-expression. It is compelled. It is essentially slave labor. No man who gets nothing but pay out of his work is really free or alive. For at least eight hours a day he is already dead. No wonder that men are troubled by a sense of futility.

II

A similar futility often follows us when we try to find out what to do in this world which has become so big that it scares us, which lays so violent restraints upon our activities, which tars us all with the same brush, and to which our daily tasks seem so unrelated. We are tempted to take refuge in banal platitudes. We are appalled at crime. We say profoundly that what we need is law and order. We shout for law and order. Certainly. No one can deny it. But it does not get us any-

where. This is merely restating the trouble. We are alarmed at the social tensions of the hour between capital and labor, between race and race. Perhaps we had better be alarmed. So we prescribe brotherhood. By all means! The answer is one hundred percent correct. Naming the true answer is better than naming a false one. But naming the answer does little enough. What does brotherhood mean in the concrete? How shall we get it? What is the next step? An important newspaper recently praised the President of the United States for extolling common sense. It was not the best part of his speech. The paper was hardly fair to him. Of course we need common sense. But what is common sense? And if it is so common and things are still so far from perfect is it not possible that our greater need is for some uncommon sense? We preachers proclaim Christianity will save the world. We are altogether right for once. But next morning the world goes its same old way and says, "See how futile those parsons are."

Our taste for banal platitudes reminds one of a prominent American who some years ago stumped the country in search for high political preferment. His speeches stressed his readiness to give due consideration to this, and just treatment to that, and fair attention to the other thing, and proclaimed that he carried an open mind. Then came a withering paragraph from one of our political weeklies. It reminded us that the whole debate is about what constitutes due considera-

tion, just treatment and fair attention, and added that of course this gentleman had an open mind, wide open, but that no one had ever detected a single idea either going in or coming out.

III

Then what are we going to do with this haunting sense of futility that overtakes so many in the midst of the common road of life? It is easy to turn the flank of the depression that assaults us because of the bigness of the world. Physics says that we accomplish just as much when we move a ton one foot as when we move a pound two thousand feet. Perhaps you cannot move the world as far as your great-grandfather moved his village, but to move the world a very little bit means as much as to move a village a long way. The same meanings are there. But to move the world at all we need standing room, a fulcrum and a lever. We cannot escape futility and be fresh and rested until we find these. Where can we find them?

Did circumstances ever shout futility at a man any louder than they did at Paul? His bodily presence was weak. His old friends were estranged. All he believed and dreamed was daily affronted and denied by the pride and the might of a hostile Roman empire along whose road he wandered, footsore, despised, hunted. Circumstances never decreed futility more plainly. Yet few men did so much to move the world. In

the third chapter of his letter to the Philippians we learn of his strategy. "I press." He does not flee. He does not stand still. He does not drift. He presses. That is what Paul did and countless unnamed fellow Christians of his time, here a tent maker, there a doctor, yonder a household slave. How futile they looked. They went about in sheep-skins, in goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated, wandering in mountains and deserts and holes of the earth. They did not receive the promises. They only saw them and greeted them from afar. But each could say, "I do not flee, I do not stand still. I do not drift. I press. I press."

Have you ever watched a stream of water suddenly imprisoned by a cave-in from its high banks? What happens then? It presses. Every drop presses. At any given level each drop presses with the same power as its neighbors. Indeed if one level seems to press more than another it is only because it has borrowed power from other drops above it. The stream mounts. It presses. Presently it bursts its barrier, or cuts across some one point at the top and tears out its channel as wide and deep as ever it was before. There is no single drop of water that has not had its part in determining the hour of the victory.

That is the Christian strategy. The barrier is big, but you do not have to flee or stand still or drift. You can press. You go into business. As the stream is confined by its banks, so is your course largely marked out for you. But a thou-

sand times a day you have chances to press for higher standards and a more serviceable life. You can do the same in journalism, in law, in medicine, in politics. You are ashamed of child labor, of war, of our prisons, of our tax system. You can destroy no evil by a wave of the hand. But you can press. Then your work does have meaning, and it is as much to move the world a millimeter as it is to move a hamlet a mile.

No great success comes in any other way. In his famous chapter on habits, William James promises that any youth who day by day devotes himself to his studies will presently discover he has become one of the competent men in his chosen field, for all the time that power of sure judgment that makes one wise will have been building itself up. Pressure did it.

No great institution comes about in any other way. No church is made by one man or two or three or ten, nor does more than a paltry fraction of its real creators ever find the public eye. A great church is made by a multitude of men and women, each one of whom can say, "I press." In my desk I have the front page of a bulletin written by the pastor of a great church in an eastern city. He calls it "The church of a thousand pastors." He knew what makes a great church. It is made by a membership in which each one can say, "I press. I press my own life into churchly ways. I press my own neighborhood toward the church. I press for its standards in my social life and my daily toil."

This was the strategy of Jesus. Because the rest of Palestine has so much faded out we see him in a false perspective and forget how inconspicuous he was. Much of Jerusalem must have failed to see any real difference between the three crosses outside the city walls. Most of the story of the Gospels is of one going humble and obscure ways, but pressing, pressing all the time. Now it was a visitor by night needing a new vision, now little children needing kindness on the street, now the harlot needing the everlasting mercy, now the Scribes and Pharisees needing the truth though there was but a single voice to tell it. He pressed and he broke across the dam. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, ye whose work goes hard, whose accomplishment does not seem worth the pain of toil, whose yoke chafes and presses and makes you sore, learn of me. I will refresh you. I will rest you. I will show you that it is not a man's part to flee, or to stand still, or to drift. It is a man's part to press! This is one thing that is not futile."

IV

Then there is more. There is fellowship. "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." Jesus could press the prodigal to return because he knew that the Father was waiting and that the Father's heart was pressing there in the famine-stricken country as much as was his own. Because Jesus was pressing he saw God in the lily

where other men were blind and he saw God in the cross where other men were horrified.

Press and you find others pressing. It is marvelous how, when you set yourself really to move the world a little, you become aware of a great multitude pressing the same way. Again and again the mount is full of the chariots of God and the horsemen thereof. But you see more. You see something more than humans pressing too. The drops of water pressed on the obstruction because all the world is in the grip of the attraction of gravitation in which all things tend toward rest. So you discover God at work pressing everywhere through human life. The savage fifty thousand years ago drawing bison on the roof of the cave in Spain and Bertram Goodhue designing the new chapel for the University of Chicago are both under pressure from God, who is perfect beauty. The philosopher in his den and the scientist in his laboratory are under pressure from God, who is perfect truth. The conscience of the little child, the remorse of the criminal, the ecstasy of the saint, are all witness to pressure from God, who is perfect goodness. The fellowship in which Jesus rested is open to those who press with him in the world that both he and we inhabit.

Only remember that it must be pressure, not flight or standing still or drifting, but pressure. What hard thing will you do to-day just because you are conscious that it is Christian? Unconsciously you will do many Christian things. That

is good, but that is "coasting." Where is the pressure? It is to those who press with him that there comes the secret of his saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

VIII: BRIDGES AND THINGS THAT CROSS THEM

Ephesians 2: 8. "For by grace have ye been saved through faith."

FAITH is one of the greatest concepts of religion. It therefore seems paradoxical that faith is one of the most difficult of all religious subjects to discuss. That is partly because of the very greatness of faith. But it is also because most of us feel impelled to begin any discussion by defining faith and then often our definition proves a restriction. We start with clothes that we expect to wear through the whole adventure, but we split them open the very first day. Paul here suggests another procedure. Instead of beginning with definition let us begin with description. Nobody has ever defined electricity, but nobody doubts its existence or is unaware of its work. No one has ever defined life, but no one doubts it or values it lightly. A recent writer has pointed out that the eleventh chapter of Hebrews begins with a definition of faith, "Faith is assurance of things hoped for, a confidence of things not seen," but points out that the writer immediately runs away from his definition into description and begins to tell us how faith works and what it does.

That is just the way in which Paul is treating

faith in this sentence from Ephesians. He is not defining faith, although his theology can be organized around this word more than around any other. But he is not defining faith. He is describing it. He is telling us how it works and what it does. As an engineer might refuse to define electricity, but call your attention to it by pointing out the lights of the city streets, the moving trains, the shock that goes through your arms when you touch live terminals and say, "This is what I mean"; as a teacher might refuse to define life, but call your attention to it in the marvelous re-awakening of a spring day and say, "This is what I mean"; so when Paul speaks here of faith he is not defining it, but reminding us of a great experience that came through it and saying, "This is what I mean." Let us then declare our independence of prisoning definition and approach faith in this freer way.

I

Faith is like a bridge, a great, wide, modern bridge with different levels and broad roadways and places for trains and automobiles and pedestrians. Across the bridge comes knowledge. It is strange that more people do not notice this. It is stranger yet that many actually deny it. Here is the great bridge from the known to the unknown, from darkness to light, from ignorance to learning. It is thronged with discoveries and inventions. It is so crowded with the sciences

that they jostle one another. This bridge, so packed and jammed with traffic, runs through every laboratory, through every study, through every library in the world. Yet you have hardly to go across the street to hear some wise looking person telling you with all possible assurance either that the bridge is not there at all or that nothing worthwhile ever comes across it.

So common is this attitude that we cannot speak of faith at all without dwelling on this point. How often do we meet people who not only recognize that faith and knowledge are different, but assert that they are opposed. They say faith is make-believe knowledge. It is a quite fraudulent substitute for knowledge, for faith is vastly inferior to knowledge. We fall back on it only when knowledge fails. When knowledge fails we have to do the next best thing and that may be faith, but it is always inferior. It is this kind of superficiality that led the child to define faith as "believing what you know ain't so."

But is the roadway inferior to its traffic? Is the bridge ever to be separated from what it carries? Columbus starts into the western sea. Every discouragement, every postponement, every doubt he meets with the cry, "Sail on." What is the basis of his adventure? It is faith. Faith carried him to the knowledge of a new hemisphere even more than did ocean or did ship. Edison ransacks the world to find a filament that will glow with electric heat and not be consumed. He does not know that there is any such thing.

But he has faith. The brilliance of our modern world owes quite as much to faith as it does to knowledge. A man starts out in the automobile business. He has the faith that the way to success is to make the cheapest possible car. No one else has that faith, but because he has it he becomes about the richest man on earth. Einstein offers us a new account of reality. I do not pretend to understand it, but I notice he is always waiting for fresh demonstrations, some more accurate instruments of measurement, some eclipse or other astronomical observation. Knowledge is always coming to us, but the way of its coming is over the bridge of faith.

Moreover, if these seem exceptional instances, let it be recalled that the whole intellectual fabric and the whole routine of life rest on the bridge of faith. Often when traveling we cross bridges that we do not see. The train goes along a high embankment. We see a stream approaching from the right and leaving us to the left, but the bridge is buried out of sight. There is such a bridge under all our common life. Its name is faith. You have not the knowledge that the world of to-morrow will be like the world of to-day, but you do all your living of to-day in the faith that it will be. You have not the knowledge that the same scientific laws that obtain in one part of the universe will obtain in every other place. The very uniformity and regularity of nature that are the basis of the total scientific life of the world are held up by the bridge of faith. Surely if every

discovery, every invention, every progressive manufacturer, every scientist is using this bridge, there is no reason for anybody to hold it up against religion if religion comes to us the same way. Oh, I know religion has sometimes tried to make the bridge carry more than it can and religion has sometimes started things across the bridge that run off in the middle or break down half way, but that does not mark any peculiarity of religion. It just shows how normal and natural religion is, that its great certainties come across this same bridge of faith.

II

Some bridges seem to grow of themselves, to expand by use. When the Williamsburg suspension bridge was thrown across the East River, there was first a single thread that the eye could hardly see against the sky and then it grew and grew and grew. A great network dropped from the cables until at last the finished bridge was done. When the cantilever bridge was put across Hell Gate, great arms of steel grew toward each other like the limbs of trees until they met above the flood. When traveling we often find bridges being double tracked because the traffic has increased.

Faith is like that. This is probably the reason that we feel something unsatisfactory in a great many books and lectures and sermons that so earnestly try to supply us with aids and props to

faith. If you put a prop under a suspension or cantilever bridge, you will usually do little but shift the strain to some other point. The bridge is a fabric and must be taken as a whole.

Why does Professor Slosson have a faith in the ability of chemistry to serve the world in ways that most of us have never dreamed? Because he has spent so many years studying and practicing his chemistry. Why does the electrical engineer give us pictures of an electrified world such as most of us can hardly imagine? It is because of the years in which he has worked in his electrical laboratory. Why do medical men have a faith beyond most of us in the possibility of a world free of disease? It is because they have worked with the resources that intelligent medicine supplies. So with religion. If instead of putting props under our faith we used more, we should get on a great deal better.

Perhaps you don't believe very much in Christ to-day. He is to you a sentimental name, an incidental historical memory, a symbol of goodness, but very little more. Very well. But good for what, good in what way? Trust yourself to that goodness a little in the way of taking it into account, in the way of trying to share it. Then see how your vision and appreciation of it grow. Use the bridge of faith and see how every time he comes back to you across that bridge, he comes more worthy of your faith till you trust him utterly, the Captain of your life, the way out of the world's woe, the path up to God.

Perhaps to-day you do not believe very much in God. He is to you a vague theory, a policeman to keep other folks in order, but very little more. But now trust Him all you can even if your faith is full of "ifs" and "perhapses" and "supposes." Act on all the faith you have. Make Him the working hypothesis of your life. Build Einsteinian theories with Him as the major premise. Go on Columbian voyages in His direction. Give faith a chance to propagate itself until the little flimsy bridge that now sways against the sky becomes the great thoroughfare, strong for anything that needs to cross it.

III

Bridges unify and release. You know how the bridges in Chicago and New York make the different parts of those great cities into one. You know how often great populations have been checked by a river until bridges have released them to grow upon the other side.

So is it with faith. We have seen that it unifies the world of truth and unites a man to Christ and God. So does it also unify a man inwardly. It consolidates a man. The world is overrun by folk who have no unity. They are like a football team that has forgotten or never learned the signals. They are split into two or three or a dozen parts. They fade out in all directions. It is perfectly clear what is the matter with them. They

lack the uniting influence of some great faith, something that draws out and develops all they are. Columbus did a thousand commonplace things before he did anything to keep his memory alive. It was only when his scattered life was unified by one great faith that he became immortal. The life of many a harum scarum boy is disorganized and futile until he makes some athletic team in which he has great faith. Paul knew all about this. His was a weak and shattered and defeated life until on the Damascus Road he met his Master and gave his whole faith to him. Then for the first time he was a whole man. Faith is a bridge that unites us.

And faith releases. William James has an essay on the unrealized powers of men. He gives instances of men who, on great occasions, have risen to strength and effectiveness that they never dreamed were possible. But it is noticeable that these occasions came when the men believed in something tremendously and trusted themselves to it completely. What he shows us on a large scale is really written in almost every life. The job you only half believe in you do but weakly. The job that you believe in with all your heart you do with power. If you are partially committed to an ideal you serve it feebly. If you are wholly committed you serve it mightily. Faith is a bridge that unites a man and makes him whole. Faith is a bridge that summons and releases.

IV

After seeing faith as a bridge over which all knowledge comes, as a bridge that is self-propagating, as a bridge that unites and releases our powers, it is time now to come back to our text, "For by grace have ye been saved through faith." Don't you see that Paul is talking about a bridge. What saves a man? Grace saves a man—the unmerited favor, compassion and help of God. That is the deepest witness of the religious life. Now put it in simpler language. Life comes to its finest not by self-discipline only, not by self-help only. Life comes to its finest when something not ourselves enters us, takes hold of us, remakes us according to the heavenly vision. So Paul writes, "By grace have ye been saved" but adds, "through faith." Faith is the bridge over which salvation comes.

The part of faith in the redemption of life has been stated again and again and in so many ways that the world often wonders what is meant by a faith that saves. Often we have meant faith in a creed. It is important to know and believe the truth, but the devils may believe and only tremble. Often we have meant faith in some legalistic scheme of salvation. But there is a faith much more warm and mighty than anything like that. That to which you really and truly and honestly are devoting yourself, to which you are actually entrusting your life, toward which you build these

bridges of faith across which knowledge comes and by which life is unified, in whose service your powers are released, that dominates you. Over most bridges there is traffic passing in both directions. From that region to which you build your bridges of faith there return to you the powers that dominate and make or mar you.

You put your faith in money. All right. The power of money returns across the bridge and by and by your soul is as yellow and metallic as the gold it trusts. You put your faith in pleasure. Very well. The power of pleasure returns across the bridge that you build towards it and by and by your soul is as trivial and jazzy as a cabaret. You put your faith in evil. Your lips do not confess that faith, but your life proclaims it. Then across the bridge that you have built there come back to you the poisons and diseases that smear and stain and rot the very soul. Our faith may curse us as readily as it may bless us.

Or perhaps you have changed your faith, or perhaps you are going to change your faith to-day. Back at the center of your life you quit putting your trust in things that are low and begin putting it in those that are high. Money shall never again be your master but only your servant. Pleasure shall always be re-creation for the best. Your trust is to be in truth and beauty and goodness. Your devotion henceforth is to center in him who is chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely. Then what happens? You build your bridge across in that direction. At first it is

only a little footpath. Then it widens and becomes more mighty until it is able to bear the whole weight of your life. And then there is passing in two directions. Back to you as to Paul there come visions of the truth, the beauty, the power, of Christ and of God. They grip you, they transform you, they glorify you till with Paul you can say, "It is not I that live, but Christ liveth in me," and you can range yourself with the Ephesians to whom Paul wrote, "For by grace have ye been saved through faith."

IX: OUR GENERATION AND THE NEXT

Jeremiah 31: 29. "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge."

THIS ancient proverb is twice quoted in the Bible. Both here and in Ezekiel the writers insist it cannot mean that the guilt of parents is imputed to their children. But, although bereft of this application, the saying remains profound and searching.

Of late there has been a lot of blaming of youth, a lot of holding up of hands in horror, a lot of calling across a gulf of misunderstanding, "We never did that when we were young!"—probably as futile a thing as any adult can say. So far as this represents deep concern for youth and a sense of the ultimate importance of character, it is all to the good. But the question has to be raised whether this attitude does not miss the main point after all. It assumes that to-day's youth are of a different blood from that of their elders, that they are troubled by some new perversity freshly come out of the pit.

I am not prepared to admit any wholesale moral inferiority in the youth of to-day. Indeed my own experience would suggest many comparisons distinctly in their favor. But I do insist that in areas of life where the youth of to-day are slipping you must take more than youth into account.

Never mind the old debate whether heredity or environment is the greater influence. For my argument it is enough that between them they hold the field and that youth makes neither of them. Youth surely does not make its heredity. Neither does it make its environment. If, where, whenever youth is slipping, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge."

One of the commonest devices is to blame the shortcomings of youth on the war. The war is being overworked as an explanation of social phenomena, but that its effect on youth was adverse is beyond question. You cannot wrench millions of boys from home and very natural human contact, you cannot herd hundreds of thousands of girls in factories, you cannot teach youth its one immediate business is to kill, without debasing the souls of youth. Much of the present lowered opposition to immorality and loss of the sense of the sanctity of life were furthered by the war. But who made the war? Not youth. It is the immemorial curse of youth that it must fight the wars that older people make. The guilt of parents does not descend to the children, but the children have to atone for the sins of the parents just the same. When I see the moral wreckage the war has brought to youth, I still have to say, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge."

The study of cases makes this more vivid and forecasts much of the rest of what I have to say.

A great teacher of boys has told of a lad expelled after making a hopeless mess of his school life. Whereupon his mother appeared to plead for him, to discourse on his fine nature, to say no one but she had ever understood him, to assert that if people were imprisoned in a burning building he would be the first to rush in to save them. The teacher could do nothing but express his regret that he could not furnish the burning building for the demonstration. But since then he has been asking a question none has been able to answer, "What possible chance has that boy against the handicap of such moral flabbiness in his mother?"

Principal Stearns of Andover tells of another boy dismissed from school for a palpable fault. He was one of three brothers—all star athletes. The brothers rose in wrath and said they would go too. The Principal acquiesced. The three got part way home and wired father for needed funds. Instead, the father came and met the boys and all four went back to Andover. They filed into the Principal's office. The conversation was something like this: "So you've fired my boy?" "Yes!" "And the other two want to leave with him?" "Yes." "Well, I'm here to say the other two will not leave school, and to say further that if you had not fired the one I'd have taken all three away myself." Another question which has never been answered—Why should any one wonder that all the sons of that man made good?

Judge Franklin C. Hoyt, through whose court ten thousand children pass each year, says that

we are faced not with the problem of delinquent children, but with the problem of delinquent parents. "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge."

I

But, more positively, what does this generation owe to the next? I have no hope of giving more than fragmentary answers in a matter where I am myself but a kindergarten learner.

Of course the first thing we owe them is a full recognition of our own responsibility. The improvement of school education, the lengthening of school hours till the schools even supervise the play of our children, the most careful selection of the household helpers who share in the care of the children—these are in no sense substitutes for direct, continuous, responsible contact with the children and care for them by the parents themselves. I honor the mother who with three expert maids in the house would as soon have gone without her meals as allow any but herself to give the children their daily baths. The fashioning of the deepest tastes and impulses and "love-images" that will later exercise an imperious control over the whole life and often dictate its whole destiny begins very early, even in infancy. To vacate one's responsibility then is often to vacate all possibility of ever being real parents at all.

In the second place, we must realize youth's unconscious imitation of us, even of things of

which we are unconscious in ourselves. Here is something that should make the strongest man pause and kneel and pray and rise and struggle that his life may be cleansed of its most secret faults. "What you are speaks so loud I can not hear what you say!" How often is Emerson's sentence true in your home and mine! Psychologists tell us that talk and language below the standard are dangerous even in the presence of sleeping children, so unconscious is their imitation. We ought to try to make our children far, far better than we are. But we have no right idly to assume they will be. We must face our responsibility and realize that deeds and moods and attitudes weigh more than precepts, commands and lectures.

II

That leads directly to the third thing we owe—honesty!—scrupulous, comprehensive, pervasive honesty. How little there is of it! At least, how many homes and parents seem to know nothing of it. How many relationships between elders and youngsters are altogether vitiated by subtle dishonesties! A five-year-old stood on her front steps as her parents drove away and remarked, "There go the two greatest liars in the state of Michigan." Why? Because for days they had been promising to take her "to-morrow" and had never done it. What chance was there left for any helpful or happy influence of those parents

over that child? Yet have you never risked the same thing? Have you never made threats you had no idea of ever carrying out, regardless of the fact that thereby you risked pulling down the whole integrity of the moral universe about your child's ears? Again and again even in educated homes I hear parents calmly reporting deliberate untruths they have told their children because the falsehoods were immediately effective for managing them, without any apparent suspicion that such a course is a sure prophecy of the time, not far away, when they will not be able to manage them at all after the children discover that they are liars. The heart of a child is the keenest detective in the world.

Nor does such dishonesty only wreck home relationships. It often deprives the child of that on which all beings have the highest claim—the truth. It is a strange audacity that we should think we can improve on the truth. It is a heinous infidelity, the very sum of all infidelities, that we should distrust the truth. I shall not enlarge on it, but I know and you know that the path of life is crowded with those that were wrecked in youth because when the first questions were asked about how God made us, about the sacred functions of the body, about the meaning of birth and the way in which God has most obviously bound the generations together, they were met by those who had the audacity to think they could improve on the truth. The questions ought to have been answered in holy and complete honesty. Instead they were

met with falsehoods or by an embarrassed postponement and the children were sent to the gutter to learn some truth and more falsehood and to have all the sanctities of life drenched and stained with filth.

It was a child who had been repeatedly deceived who said, "Well, I'm on to Santa Claus and now I think I'll look into this Jesus business." I don't remember at all where I heard it, but it comes to me through memory like the wail of a doomed soul. I often paraphrase the words of Jesus, "It were better for a man to have a great millstone tied about his neck and be thrown in the midst of the sea than that he lie to a child."

III

Close to this is the fourth thing we owe—immediate contact with reality. Parents and teachers often seek a middle course between the spoiling and indulgent attitude and the overbearing and repressive attitude. The way through is suggested by Prof. Edwin B. Holt. He pictures two mothers, both eager to keep their children from getting burns. One sees to it the child never comes near any flame or radiator. The other deliberately brings the finger near enough for the child to feel the heat and understand. The first makes the child's conduct a "function of the mother." The second makes it a "function of reality." Professor Holt prophesies that ten years later the first mother will be a nervous wreck, while the second will be saying, "Johnnie,

get the matches and light the lamp and put it on the table." As rapidly as possible, we must pass the stage where our children's conduct is a function of ourselves and make it a function of reality. For the time comes when parents and children must part. It may be by the death of the one or the marriage of the other. Then woe is unto those children if their morality has not learned to stand on its own feet.

This suggests another point—the need of moral independence. Judge Hoyt says one reason so many thousand children troop through his court is that parents weakly allow their children liberties because other parents do. "Because others do!" Where the community life is compact, how often do we hear that argument and how often do we feel its force? We have no clearer obligation to our children than to train them in moral independence, to bring them some early revelation that a thing is not necessarily wise and right because many do it. And we'd better begin demonstrating this to our children by exercising more moral independence ourselves.

IV

Finally, we owe it to the next generation to give religion a chance. There is a debate as to whether religion can be taught. It is largely a matter of the definition of terms. Religion cannot be done up in a package like some of the facts of history and handed across the table as one passes the salt. But religion can be revealed. It can be

given a chance. Youth can be exposed to it. There is something very moving in the unanimity with which parents want their children to be religious. There is something equally alarming in their common failure to face their own responsibility in the matter. There is no place like home for the catching of religion. There are none like parents to expose the children. Religion is the most precious thing in the world, the most protective, beautifying, fertilizing, creative, joyful. To how much of its contagion is a child in your home exposed? Is it exposed there to the greed of things, to the ambitions of social life, to all the clamors and hastes of these modern days, but not at all to religion?

Compare this home with the home with the true religious spirit. That spirit may find partial expression through grace at meals and family prayers. It will certainly find expression through frequent religious conversations, constant references to religious ideals and standards, reasonable participation in religious activities, and a sense that all life is bathed in God. To be reared in such a home is the very first right of every child. We owe it to the next generation to see it is reared in such homes, with those who face their responsibilities, realize youth's unconscious imitations, are honest, are real, are morally independent, and give religion a chance. Then men shall no more say, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge."

X: THE INHUMANITY OF GOD

Hosea 11: 9. "For I am God and not man."

THOSE who try in any way to sum up or characterize whatsoever of progress there has been in religious thought during the last fifty or one hundred years, almost invariably tell us that it consists essentially in the humanizing of our thought of God. Once men dwelt on the differences between man and God. Now they dwell on the likenesses. Once men described the divine and the human as infinitely distant from each other. Now they describe them as intimately near. Once the favorite thought and verse in the first chapter of the Bible was that "in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Now the favorite thought and verse is that "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." Once men chiefly described God by the terms that cannot under any circumstances be applied to man—His omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, infinity, eternity. Now they chiefly describe God by terms that sometimes can be applied to the best of men—His pity, compassion, love, fatherhood. "The churches of America of various names,"—I quote from a work on the progress of religion,—"went along together, shifting the center of doctrine from the sovereignty to the fatherhood of God."

With this change this pulpit has always been in closest sympathy and never more so than to-day. It is a change that makes God more worshipful and humanity more hopeful. It is a change that simplifies a vast amount of religious theory where simplification is most to be desired. If humanity and divinity are not essentially opposite and ever struggling to be apart, but are two parallel streams of light ever yearning to converge, how much more intelligible is the incarnation and how much more credible is the divinity of our Lord. It is moreover a change that returns to the richer language of the Bible. What greater description of God is there in the Old Testament than that which reminds us that "like as a father pitieth his children so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him"? What feature of the New Testament is so important as that Jesus is forever calling God by the name of Father? In that word—a human word—we have summed up all the dearest and mightiest truths we know of God: His personality, His wisdom, His strength, His tenderness, His sacrificing love.

Nevertheless, like most good things, this advance has brought its own peril with it. If we humanize God too far, God will disappear and only humanity be left. The danger is that we shall be like the men who take some timber from the roof in order to make a ladder with which to go upstairs but who take too much timber until the roof falls in and there is no upstairs left to go to. It is well to learn the affinity of earth and sky. To

pull the sky down is a dangerous matter. It takes the lift out of life, and lifting is what we need. So to-day I would remind you of the great sentence from the pen of Hosea that he had heard spoken out of the heart of God—"For I am God and not man." Hosea's prophecy is commonly called the gospel of the Old Testament. He seems to be nearer than any other one of his age to the spirit of Christ. His book will teach us more of the humanity of God than any book before Saint Mark was written. Yet I find he feels that there is a point beyond which his thought must not go, "for I am God and not man."

I

Then let us try to mention to-day some of the ways in which man and God are different with differences that it is worth our remembering.

We are still in the making. God is not so. We will not even say that God is completed for that would imply that once He was in the making, which is more than we know. To be each one of us in rapid process of development marks us off from the beasts. It shows us as superior to them. The bee, for instance, knows very much indeed but appears at the moment of its birth to know all that it will ever know. There is no development there. To be each one of us in rapid process of development also marks us off from God, but for another reason and in the opposite direction. It shows us inferior to Him. We develop away

from the beasts who are incapable of development and toward God who needs none, for He completely is all that a being can be.

> "Progress, Man's distinctive mark alone,
> Not God's, and not the beast's: God is, they are;
> Man partly is, and wholly hopes to be."

It is worth while remembering this for it is this that makes it possible for us to pray to God as we cannot to the beasts or to one another. It is this that makes it possible for us to rely on God as we cannot on the beasts or on one another. All that in our divinest moments we have ever dreamed and hoped of being, God is. All that is dimly seen by us when we stand on the highest mountain peaks of present being and gaze out into the dim, unconquered regions of possible personality, God is and is already. That is why God is God to us. That is why He is our refuge and our strength, our rock and our fortress and our exceeding great reward. That is why He is the home of the soul. He is God and not man.

II

This implies another contrast that is worth remembering. We are changing. The changes in our mortal frames are often startling but they are still the smallest part of the changes that we undergo. Our greater changes are those of ideal, of purpose, of taste, of character. God is not changing. Of course, as our Father, His life answers to

our life; His joy to our joy; His sorrow to our sorrow; and His purposes are expressed in reference to our changing needs. But in all those things that give continuity to life in character, in purpose, in desire, God is not changing.

This steadfastness of God is also very much worth remembering. It is what makes the beginning of steadfastness possible in our lives. Men in military, industrial and mercantile life tell us that it is very demoralizing to have a master who is marked by fickleness. How hard it is to amount to anything if your superior lays down one principle to-day and a contrary principle to-morrow; makes one demand to-day and an inconsistent demand next week. God is not so. Your sinfulness that He hated yesterday He will hate eternally. Your love that He blessed yesterday He will bless forever and forever. The sacrifice that brought His smile will never be anything but a joy to Him. The cup of cold water given in ancient Palestine shall be regarded at the final Judgment Day. He changeth not, neither forgetteth, for He is God and not man.

To most men as they grow older the world grows more intelligible. The wisdom of the aged consists in their power to point out meanings and uses where younger folk cannot see them. The big child explains to the little that it is worth while going through the task of learning the letters because by and by that will open the door to all the joys of reading. The grown man does not want his boy to have too easy a time at his lessons and

his games and his start in business. He knows that some difficulty and hardship is good for him. When keen persons get to be fifty and beyond they often surprise us by the way in which they are able to find material for good in struggles and misfortunes that to us seem altogether bad and costly. Sometimes they do not think it altogether bad for men to suffer innocently or quite unjustly for they see how out of such innocent and unjust pain there may come the sympathy and understanding that make an indisputable adhesive in the building of God's Kingdom. And God—must not God be like this, only different? For there are places where our wisest human vision stands balked and done in the presence of evil. But God is not man. Does He not see where the best of us is blind and see that all evil is material for good even as our wisest see a part of it to be, and Christ saw that his cross would be?

Surely this is a contrast between God and us that is worth remembering. Life would hardly be bearable if there were not some one somewhere knowing all the meaning of its pain and seeing how at last it can all be turned to good. You went through the hard discipline of education because your teacher understood, although you did not, that at last it would give you fellowship with the choicest spirits of the race. You endure the discomforts of the dentist's chair not because you understand why each hurt is needful but because he does. And there is One who understands all

the toil and all the hurt and all the injustice and inequality of this life, for He is God and not man.

III

Yet once more and finally, you and I are limited in our capacity to be concerned in other lives. God is not so limited. Our affectional powers are the largest things we have. We come nearer to universality in our hearts than in any other way. We can have a loving attitude to multitudes whom we do not know. We may have a loving concern for throngs for whom we cannot do a single thing. The richest development that any human spirit can undergo is of this capacity to be concerned in other lives. The extent to which this development sometimes reaches is really marvelous. It is beautiful to watch it. A lad loves his two parents and tells us that all the love of which his heart is capable is going out to them, but one day he meets that other one ordained from all eternity to be the companion of his stronger years, and then a great new compartment of affection is opened in his life. Yet it is not at the expense of the old for he loves his parents even better because of this new love that has surprised him. Then one day another miracle occurs. In that moment when he hears the first cry of his first-born, another great new love is added to the old. Yet not at all at the expense of the old. He loves his wife as mother even more than as companion and now that he understands what parenthood

means he loves his parents even better. So with each step in that family's growth his power to be deeply and completely concerned in other lives is multiplied. By and by the children marry and at each wedding he takes a new son or a new daughter into his uncrowded heart. By and by the grandchildren sit upon his knee and with each new little stranger that arrives he learns a larger and more numerous way of loving until at last the man who told you he could love but two is loving his fifteen or his twenty as nobly as he ever had loved the two. There isn't anything more beautiful, more divine, more Godlike this side of the gates of heaven than the developing of our capacity to love. And sometimes it reaches out way beyond the family. We must not forget our uncles and our aunts. We must not forget some spirits unblessed by home and family affection who yet have learned the greatness of love: some teachers we have known, some pastors who have blessed us, some who have been just friends and have made the world more friendly.

Yet there is always a limit to this, is there not? Lincoln, we are told, had a heart with room in it for all mankind, and yet he could not take many in in just the same way that he took his boy Tad. Wise men sometimes caution us against having too many intimates. They fear lest we sacrifice quality for quantity, which is not well. We are a little suspicious of the man who is not evidently more devoted to his family and more interested in it than he is concerned in anybody else. We

are afraid that he is shallow or not true. Sooner or later the power of every human heart to be intimately concerned in other lives reaches its limit and exhaustion.

How often in days when we are thinking of God in ways so human have we made the mistake of carrying this limitation up to Him! Men standing in great need of God have felt that He could not bother about them, He has so great multitudes for which to care. Men looking on the throngs that pulse through our city streets and thinking how few it is possible for them to know have felt a great loneliness chill them with the feeling that neither can God know many. Men travel throughout the world till they get some sense of the immensity of its teeming life or travel through the years of history and count the nations gone which Christianity says are yet living somewhere in the life of God, and then remember the limitations of the best human hearts they know and tell us it is all impossible. Perhaps some one here is suffering an unnecessary loneliness to-day, feeling that God may perhaps bear the destinies of the nations but must be too busy for the individual woe.

Then come back to our text. "I am God and not man."

> "There's a wideness in God's mercy,
> Like the wideness of the sea"

which envelops the whole world and rolls eternally.

"For the love of God is broader
Than the measures of man's mind,
And the heart of the eternal
Is most wonderfully kind:
But we make His love too narrow
By false limits of our own."

That is the trouble. We take our limitations and try to compress God's life within them to our infinite loss and His disappointment. There is not a sorrow in any life to-day that may not have all of God's comfort just as if there were no other life in the world. All the woes of humanity cannot come between you and Him, for He is God and not man. There is not a temptation shaking any life here to-day that may not have the private personal help of God as if there were none else in the universe. All the temptations of the race cannot come between you and Him for He is God and not man. There is not a loneliness of solitude or of misunderstanding, there is not an ambition to live more purely and more usefully, that may not have His comfort and His blessing just as if you and He were the only persons in the universe. All the loneliness of your fellows, all the ambitions of your comrades cannot come between you and Him, "for He is God and not man."

XI: LAW AND MYSTERY AND GOD

Mark 4: 26-27. "So is the Kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how."

THERE were some things that this farmer did know. He knew that if he wanted a crop there had to be seed and the seed had to be sown, cast upon the ground. Of course he also knew the advantage of preparing the soil, of weeding it after the crop had sprouted and of seeing that it did not get too dry. But with all this knowledge there was also mystery. Days and nights went by in which the farmer did nothing about his crop. He slept and rose and went about other things and meanwhile it grew, he knew not how.

All this, says Jesus, is like the Kingdom of God. He does not say the casting of the seed and the tilling of the soil are like the Kingdom of God and the rest is not. He does not say that the mysterious growth that comes from within is like the Kingdom of God and the rest is not. Not a bit of it. The whole process is like the Kingdom of God. It is all religious. It is all divine. The Kingdom of God is like both these things working together. There is the outward arrangement of circumstance. There is the inward pressure of the life of the seed. The law and the mystery are both of God.

We all see this in connection with plant life, but we are prone to forget it elsewhere. As a result our religious lives go hopping on one foot when they ought to be striding forward on two. How do we think about the universe? There was a time when it was almost all mystery. Nobody undertook to explain anything. The very idea of cause and effect, which is one of the most useful instruments of the modern mind, had not yet been born. The wind was a mystery and a spirit. The fire was a mystery, before which the soul of man might bow in utmost adoration. The stars in their mystery and their beauty declared the glory of God.

For long years men rose and slept and went about their work and these wonders took place they knew not how. But then came the day of law. The wind became a thing of thermo-dynamics and wise men could prophesy its course. The fire became a matter of chemistry that a high school student could understand. The stars were measured and their courses plotted and their very chemical composition analyzed in the spectroscope. Then men said: "The mystery is gone. The basis of religion has disappeared. God was useful in the past, but we do not need Him any longer."

This did not come about all at once. When first the law of cause and effect became a ready tool of the mind, men found it useful in little areas of life and said wherever it worked out they had an area with all mystery gone. They said, "God is

not here. God is in the gaps between such areas as these." But then the areas grew and field was joined to field as little states are built into great kingdoms. Religion was on the run till now multitudes say that it has been chased clear outside the universe altogether. Science has filled all the gaps and has explained everything without God.

I

Here we are close to the roots of the agony of much of the religious stress of our time. Here we see why so much religion has become sick and pale and defensive when it ought to be marching through the earth like a victorious army with fifes and drums and banners.

Of course it is easy to answer that science has not filled all the gaps. Reverent scientists would be the very first to make that correction for us. But this is not an adequate answer, for the process of filling up the gaps is steadily going forward. More gaps are full to-day than were yesterday and more will be filled to-morrow than are full to-day. This still leaves religion retreating and afraid, and a scared religion is hardly better than none at all.

We are wise and brave again only when we clearly understand that we are dealing here with a false dilemma. Just as false as it would be for the farmer to say that because the seed grows, he knows not how, he does not need the soil and the sunshine and the rain; or for him to say because

the soil and the sunshine and the rain are helpful, he does not need the seed. Let science fill all the gaps. Let science discover the characteristic behavior of everything. Let science write the law of cause and effect in every nook and corner of the universe. Mystery is still here, and here in more monumental form. There is the mystery why any given cause is connected with any given effect. There is the mystery why gravity attracts instead of repels. Why are there only three primary colors? Why is there any such thing as a law of cause and effect? It is a simple truth well worth our memory that when we do what we call "explaining" something, all that we do or really can do is to link one mystery to another. It is a queer tendency of the modern mind, although I hope it is a passing one, to think that if only we make the mystery big enough, we have abolished it. You would not like a fire department that tried to put out fires that way. And of course the queerest popular manifestation of this at present is the assumption that evolution explains the universe without God. What evolution really does is to tie a whole lot of little mysteries into one vast mystery.

II

But even where the mystery seems to be less, that is not dispensing with God, or the making of God any less worshipful. Who is the great man, the worthy man, the man that you trust and

admire and like to have around? Is it the man who is always a mystery? Is it the man of pure caprice, whose conduct you can never forecast; the man who does one thing in a certain situation to-day and another thing in the same situation to-morrow, who is truthful now and a liar ten minutes hence; honorable about this month's bills and dishonorable about the next's; kind and friendly on occasions and harsh and bitter at other times? Is it this man, or is it the man of whom you say, "I always know where I can find him," the man whose conduct and attitudes you can confidently predict, who meets identical situations in the same way, who is truthful both when it is pleasant and when it is unpleasant, honorable both when it is advantageous and when it is expensive, kind and friendly not sometimes, but always and everywhere? Which is the greater man? To ask the question is to answer it.

So, too, with God. Men talk easily of "reducing" God to law. The very word begs the question. To learn the laws of the universe is nothing more or less than to discover the trustworthy habits of God, to learn that He is not capricious, but faithful, reliable, worthy of our trust, good to have around.

There is mystery enough left! He who says he has learned God altogether is merely parading the fact that he is an ignoramus. He who has not time and place where he must bow in silence before the infinite mystery is only one percent wise. But he who thinks that to learn the laws of the

world reduces God, debases or exiles Him is doing himself an equal wrong. The farmer runs his farm. There is much that he does not understand, and that is of God, but God is equally in all that he understands the best. Not only has science not lessened the ultimate mystery, but where it seems to have lessened some of the nearer mysteries it has in no way dispensed with God.

III

All this applies to the relation of God and health. In few places have we suffered more from imagining a false dilemma. If the farmer's crop could talk instead of being merely talked about, it would say something like this: "My healthy growth is due to two things. It comes from two directions. It is due to the soil and the sun and the rain and the planting and the tilling. It comes from without, inward. It is due also to something inside, to this mystery of life. It comes from within, outward. Both things are necessary. Both are divine. Both are of God."

Now that seems to me to be precisely the situation in the matter of growing a healthy human body. We too frequently fall into a false dilemma. We say "either . . . or" when we ought to be saying "both . . . and." The church has done just this, and, strangely enough, in choosing which horn of the dilemma to stand by, it has elected just the one that we least expect. It has been tricked into saying, "The soil and the farming are

the only things needful. All health comes from without inward." That is why in the last fifty years we have had so great a growth of healing sects. But some have gone to the opposite extreme. They have been tricked into saying, "The mysterious inner life is all that the farmer needs for his crop. All health comes from within outwards." Surely neither position is any more correct in the matter of growing a healthy body than it is correct in the matter of running a farm. Both deny God. Both send us hopping on one foot when we ought to be striding on two.

I look for the day when it will be the normal thing for Christian people to stop choosing one or the other of these and to reach for them both. When there is sickness in my house I do not want a physician who is not a man of prayer, but it is even more essential that I pray, and it is most essential that the sick one pray. When health is poor or good health is needing to be made better there is too much in the experience of the devout, there is too much in reverent psychology and medicine, there is too much in the fundamental teaching of the Christian faith for me not to want prayer, that mysterious inner mingling of my life with the coterminous life of God. There is many a man and woman weak and sick and miserable in body solely because they expect all health to come from without inward and who will never be well again until they know the healing that comes from within.

But God also works from without inward.

The laws of the universe are the laws of God. It seems as blasphemous to deny the God outside of me, as it would be to deny the God within me. God works not only through the seed. He works also through the soil. This is all His world. Just as in growing a crop of wheat I need the life of the seed that comes from within outward and the influence of soil and sun and rain that move from without inward, so in growing a healthy human body I want God's help in both these ways. To want anything less is a partial denial of God. To seek anything less is to deprive one's self of God.

XII: DOES CHURCH MEMBERSHIP MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Ephesians 5: 25. "Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it."

THIS morning a group of our friends have transferred their membership to this church. Thereby they bear witness that they regard church membership as precious and sacred. In the words with which we have received them we have all emphasized again our sense of its importance. Nevertheless many people outside the church are asking whether church membership does make a difference, and among those who hold it precious and sacred many inquire just what difference it makes. To-day let us consider these questions.

Any one who has read much of church history or lived long in the churches will agree that we shall approach our question with more of hope if we first name some differences that membership does *not* make.

Church membership provides no guarantees for the next world. At times the church has stated that it does. Sections of the church still profess this power. They tell us that membership in them constitutes sure title to celestial happiness. To all of us this seems nothing but a blasphemous lie. At the great assize God will have no need of

our church rolls. His judgment goes too deep for that.

Neither does church membership offer any guarantee for this world. There are fair assumptions one can make in this connection, such as that all in the church will be found to be Christians, and that all Christians will be in the church. But any one who tries practically to identify the church and the Kingdom of God will find himself in trouble. He will find persons in the church, who, so far as we can see, have none of the marks of the Christian. He will find persons outside of the church who have almost every mark of the Christian. I rejoice in that—not that they are outside the church, but that the Kingdom is bigger than the church. My Lord appears to have expected that. In his great judgment picture he tells of many who will be surprised to be counted among his servants. Few things are more moving than to take one's stand on the farthest outskirts of organized Christianity and then peer outward into the great areas of the Kingdom of God where men do His will and know it not and which no ecclesiastic has ever yet surveyed. If you don't like crowds you'd better learn to, for heaven will be more largely populated than the church has commonly taught.

After admitting that the church gives guarantees neither for this world nor for the next, it is well also to admit that church membership may do actual harm. The person who is in the church without belonging there is probably getting harm.

He is moved to think of himself more highly than he ought to think and is blinded to his own chief needs. The person who is in the church without belonging there is certainly doing harm to the church. He is lowering its standards and weakening its legitimate appeal.

I

Coming now more positively to the question whether church membership makes a difference, let us remind ourselves what the church is. It is the organized, executive arm of the Kingdom of God.

It is an organization. Just as artists, golfers and authors draw together, so do Christians. It is not good for a man to be alone. Any interest unshared is likely to sicken and die. Divided we are weak, united we are strong. Mountain climbers bind themselves each to each with a strong rope so that if any one slips the rest may hold him safe. In pressing upward toward God it is well for men to be thus bound together.

But the church is an organization to do something. It is an executive body. What it is here to do we learn from its performance and its ideals. The church has given us Jesus Christ. It is the channel through which his memory and influence have been mediated to the world. All that we owe to Jesus—his transfiguration of childhood, his liberation of womanhood and glorification of manhood, his interpretation and revelation of God,

and all his transforming ideals that are working in our common life—all these we owe also to the church. The church has done more than anything else to preserve and enlarge humanity's sense of God. The church contributes prayer. There are many who can pray nowhere else except under its influence. The church specializes in character. In this work it leads all other institutions and serves the world at the place where the world most needs serving. By reason of all these things the church is the best friend that the home and the school and democracy ever had.

And the church intends something. By all these things it is and does, it intends to carry its own Christian spirit out into the world through concentric circles till the spirit of the best family life shall dominate every type of human relationship, and in school and store and shop, in art and politics and international affairs, there shall be no place where men try to profit at each other's expense, no place where the strong do not serve the weak.

II

Does membership in such a body make a difference? I think it does. First of all membership in such a body means the honorable acknowledgment of a debt. A man may never go to church, may even hate and oppose the church. Nevertheless, in the safety of the community of which he is a part, in the integrity of his business asso-

ciates, in the idealism of common life about him, he is under a hopeless debt to the church. It is as impossible to be born outside of obligations to the church, as it is impossible to be born in America and not be under debt to the United States Government. The honorable acknowledgment of a debt is good for the man that makes it and adds wealth to the community's moral life.

Church membership is also a pledge. I was born an American of a parentage that had been American for nearly three centuries. But I cannot forget the day when I attained my majority and went to the Town House of my native town, showed its selectmen that I could read the constitution, and then in a dingy room held up my right hand and swore my allegiance to my country. It made a difference. Since then I and my country have belonged to each other more consciously than we did before. We were all born under the blessing of the church, but to stand up and acknowledge that blessing and its obligations is good for us and good for the church. The pledge taken carelessly is sacrilege. But the pledge taken intelligently and gladly is a pledge of the taker to all nobility and will sustain him in many an hour of testing and always increase his meaning to the church and to the Kingdom.

Church membership focuses one's efforts. It furnishes the fulcrum for one's lever. Our larger cities are cursed with hosts of ecclesiastical tramps. They drift from church to church and preacher to preacher. They never do anything

for the church, except now and then to give it the price of a soda and to warm its pews. A local situation may give scant opportunity for this evil, but there is always plenty of opportunity for ecclesiastical slackers. The only way to be a member of the army is to be a member of some regiment within the army. And then it is that one is in a position to improve the army. If church history teaches anything, it is that church reform must come from within. One hundred men and women decrying the church's faults from without are not worth one man or woman, however obscure, trying to correct one fault from within. One hundred men and women wishing well to the church from a distance are not worth one man or woman lifting at its burdens within it.

III

But in becoming a church member one does more than make honorable acknowledgment of a debt, and more than take an honorable pledge, and more than focus one's efforts. One puts oneself in a position to be counted. If a cause is good, it is good for a man to stand up and be counted on its side, and good for the cause to have a man do that. When Elijah lost all heart and fled whining to the wilderness Jehovah reminded him that there were yet seven thousand knees in Israel that had not bowed to Baal and mouths that had not kissed him. But one wonders what those

seven thousand had been doing. They had not been bowing down to Baal or kissing him. But neither had they been standing up to be counted on Jehovah's side, else Ahab would not have dared do what he did and Elijah would not have lost his nerve and the children of Israel would not have forsaken the covenant and thrown down God's altars. The kind of religious allegiance that is known only in heaven and never suspected by men until God reports it is a poor sort.

But cannot one get the benefits of the church without being a member? Yes, pretty much. Not quite so fully and intimately and not without measurably pauperizing oneself, but one can get many of them. Cannot one do for the church and through the church and for the cause of the church without being a member? Surely one can. Every minister recalls notable examples of such service. But if every one followed that course, where would the church be? What sort of conceit is it by which you allow yourself a course of action which if universal would ruin the most precious institution on the planet? And if you try this, if you try to serve the church and yet keep back the full, free, glad, self-identification of yourself with the church, if you try to count without being counted, you are in reality voting for the church with one hand and against it with the other. I can think of few greater hindrances to the progress of the Christian church than the multitudes of men and women who at heart believe in it, but who refuse to let that fact be known by joining it. I

can think of few greater increments of power that might come to the church than for these folk to acknowledge their debt and take their pledge and focus their efforts and be counted where they ought to count.

Let us remember One who long since loved the church and for whom that meant more than that he give money to the church, or serve on the committees of the church, or sit passive in the pews of the church, or urge children to attend its schools. Let us remember that "Christ loved the church and gave *himself* for it."

XIII: THE HUMOR AND TRAGEDY OF THE RESIDUE

Text: Isaiah 44:17. "And the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image; he falleth down unto it and worshipeth, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me, for thou art my god."

I COMMEND this sentence to such as say there is no humor in the Bible. Our most helpful commentator on the Old Testament prophets has called the whole paragraph of which this verse is the conclusion one "weird burst of laughter." Apparently it is a voice from the Babylonian exile. A people whose greatness was the worship of the one true God were watching the idolatry of their captors. We are taken with them into the shops of the blacksmith and the carpenter and shown gods in the process of manufacture and then out into the forest and shown gods growing. We are made to feel the weariness and hunger and thirst of the artisan. Then we see a tree felled, perhaps with the very ax that the smith has just been sharpening. With a part of it the workman makes a fire and says, "Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire." With part he cooks his meal, roasting meat and being satisfied. And now that his limbs are warm and his stomach stilled, he sees a piece of the tree still unconsumed and bethinks himself of religion! He

snatches the remnant from the flames and the history of that tree is soon finished. With a part he warms himself. With a part he cooks his meal. "And the residue thereof he maketh a god." Thus does a Hebrew theologian pour scorn and laughter on a Babylonian idolator.

Far as we are from both the date and the occasion of our text, yet I have chosen this verse for our thought because it seems to me to have a very modern sound. There is much in our common life to answer to these words. We do not fell a tree and use part for our warmth and part to cook our food and then make the remnant into a god. But none the less we often fall into the humor and tragedy of the residue.

I

Begin with things as common as time, money and work. Inevitably much of them is expended on the things that concerned the Babylonian. Much must be given to partnership with the soil, much to productive work with head or hand, much to gaining warmth, much to the preparation of food, much to refreshment by rest or social intercourse or study. Therefore many say, "We have no time or means or strength for religion, or at best we have but little and so cannot be very religious." Or they may be quite content to give religion the residue. After work and rest and play a little time is left. Religion may have that. After all the bills are paid a few dollars remain

over. We will give them to God. After every other interest has been attended to a little energy is still unexpended. This we devote to the church. And we call this Christianity and say to it, "Deliver me, for thou art my god."

Nothing could possibly be further from the way of Jesus. This working-builder, this son of a carpenter, this eldest in a large family of boys and girls, this observer of the various toil of men, knew all about the stern demands of life and never dreamed of asking that men give all of time or means or strength to institutional religion; but although there were contrasts enough in his life to make it the most dramatic that ever has been lived, there never was any place where you might draw a line and say, "On this side he is religious and on that side he is not."

If Jesus could have met that Babylonian he would not have censured him for sharpening the ax, or felling the tree, or building the fire, or cooking the meal. But he would have told him that God ought to have been in those things quite as much as in the leavings. If Jesus were here he would be as interested in our housework as in that of Mary and Martha, in our teaching as in that of the rabbis, in our trading as much as in that in the streets of Nazareth, in our toiling as much as in that of all the weary and heavy-laden whom he called to him. But he would allow no such contrast as we commonly make between these things and religion. Instead, he would ask that these things be so pure in motive, so generous in spirit,

so useful in result, that God can dwell in them as much as He dwells in the worship of His church.

Nor is it only on the active side that we fall into the folly of the residue. We do it also upon the reflective. As one recalls the humors and tragedies of religious thought one finds that most of them arise from the fragmentary nature of that thought. There are, for instance, the men who keep their minds in water-tight compartments. They use one part of their heads to read history in general and another to read religious history, one part to study general literature and another to study the Bible. They take very good pains that science and religion never meet for fear of a fatal encounter. Then they ludicrously wonder why religious history is unreal, the Bible remote, and religion unconvincing. It's all back there in Isaiah. They are making their God out of a residue. No men are better serving religion to-day, although inevitably feared and hated, than those who are bringing all the means that have proved useful in studying general history to bear upon the study of the history of religion, and all the light that has fallen upon general literature to fall also upon the Bible. They ask that religion be as honest and painstaking as chemistry. They declare that a religious history or literature or faith that cannot survive these processes is not good enough for them. Phillips Brooks was right when he said that the ink of the learned is as precious as the blood of the martyrs. The best way to protect a lion is not to cage him in one cor-

ner of the garden. The best way is to let him out and give him the run of the whole lot.

II

In our day a third manifestation of the method of the residue is a sort of return to nature worship. No one can read the gospels without seeing how much nature ministered to Jesus. The bird, the flower, the painted west, the mysterious wind, were all his servants. But at best they were more the illumination than they were the source of his faith, and when it came to the deepest and most characteristic things he had to teach he did not clothe them in figures from nature but in stories about persons—"A shepherd had a hundred sheep," "A man had two sons." And when he came to his fullest revelation of God it was by something he himself did on "a green hill far away without a city wall."

Therefore when I hear men say that they get quite enough religion from nature I rejoice over their poetic alertness and yet wonder if they are not dignifying nature more than nature is dignifying them. I wonder what and how much religion they really get *from* this nature, "red in tooth and claw with ravine," that shrieked against Tennyson's creed. I fear it is something fragmentary and residual and that the time will come when they will cry to it, "Deliver me, for thou art my god," and cry in vain. When fear, the child of nature, clouds my way I want more than birds

and flowers. I want the presence of a person whose spirit breathes close to my own. When sin overwhelms me I want more than mountains and oceans and prairies. I want the compassions of a great heart. When death shadows me or mine I want more than evolution and the cosmic process. I want one who says, "I am the resurrection and the life." No god of the residue is big enough to live by.

But even when personality is admitted to our religious thinking we do not always escape the humor and tragedy of the residue. With pathetic eagerness to simplify their thinking, men have often mutilated their idea of God. They have fastened on some one or few elements in life and said that therein they have an adequate key to the conception of God. Now it is a thought disentangled from all other thoughts, clarified and magnified into one absolute idea, and you have the cold god of some of the philosophers. Now it is a power into which all other powers are resolved, underneath all things and moving all things, and you have the brutal god of some of the scientists. Now it is will exalted to a lonely eminence and embracing space and time and all that is in them in one great decree, and you have the cruel god of Geneva. But all this is making god out of the residue. You have left out the best, for the best is character.

"Not mine to look where cherubim
And seraphs may not see,

But nothing can be good in Him
Which evil is in me."

Whittier might have gone even further. There can be no good in me or any other that is not also in Him. Jesus made goodness the key to the thought of God—the woman who lost one piece of silver and swept the house to find it; the shepherd who left ninety and nine sheep in safety to dare the wilderness and find the one that was lost; the father who had two sons and when one of them ran away watched down the road until he saw the face of his boy turned back toward home and then ran far out upon the way to greet him. I recently had a fresh revelation of God. It was at night in the operating room of a hospital where, on the request of the parents and by the courtesy of a great physician, I was watching a famous surgeon struggle with an obscure and difficult operation in the hope of giving a little baby boy one more faint chance of life. As the seconds grew into minutes and the minutes into fives and the fives into tens and the tens into half hours and yet the thing would not come right, I knew that wisdom and skill and strength and will were all battling in that room. But when at last it did come right and I saw the surgeon's hands drop and his face turn upward with a gesture and a look like those of religious ecstasy while he exclaimed in glad but reverent tones, "I've got it," I knew that there was also goodness in that room giving power and direction to all the good man's other gifts. Since then I have been misquoting

scripture—"Like as a surgeon pitieth a little child, so God pities all those who need Him." I will not question the thought and power and will of God. But if God is made of nothing else He is made of only the residue and the leavings, and the better things of earth are better than the best in heaven.

III

Thus at last we come to the fullness of our Christian faith. We see personality as the crown of creation. We scan all the areas of personal life. We find One who is altogether lovely and chief among ten thousand times ten thousand. Then, we dare to say, "God is as good as Jesus was."

How big is your God? Was there any pity, or friendliness, or interest in common things, any hatred of sin, or forgiveness, or trust and joy in common men, in Jesus that you have not thought of as being also in God? Then you have been cheating yourself and I summon you to-day from the god of the residue to the God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

But of all the ludicrous tragedies of the residue none is more tragic than that which fractures humanity. Here the Hebrew exiles in Babylon had often sinned as greatly as any others. At least in their ancient thought God had had a heart, but His heart was only for one tribe. He was the patron of the Hebrews and of them only. The

members of other tribes were nothing before Him and their rights could be ignored and invaded without reproach or shame.

In our day we have had a spectacular reappearance of this notion. The only reason we did not see its humor was that we were blinded by its tragedy. An old resident of Berlin and student of all the utterances of the Kaiser reports that in them all he never found any clear reference to the ethics of Jesus or any view of God that did not belong back in the tribal stage of Hebrew religious thought.

Nevertheless, to have discredited the Prussian idea of God in international politics does not mean that we are making our God full size. There are people in this country whose god is big enough for the American and the Canadian and the Englishman and the Belgian, and even for the German, but whose god is by no means big enough to include also the Negro, the "Gink," the "Dago" and the Chinaman. There are employers whose God is big enough to be concerned with property and the social order that they like, but by no means big enough to be concerned with the toiling men and women who give their very bodies in mill and mine. There are laborers whose God is big enough for muscle, sweat and wages, but not big enough to have any place for those who supply tools and direction for the task. Although statesmen and politicians will smile, it is not too much to say that the great war was a theological war, coming out of a bad theology and fought to

settle a question of theology. Would that it had settled it! Nor is it too much to say that most of our social and economic troubles have the same origin and are of the same nature.

How big is your God? Do you see to it that you are warmed and fed and rested and then use what is left of life to make a god? Is your God just big enough to make you comfortable? Or is He big enough to make you eternally uncomfortable so long as there is one man or woman or child in all this world suffering in body or stunted in mind or unillumined by the love of God? Is your God the god of the residue, or the God of Jesus?

XIV: THE EASTER CHOICE

1 Corinthians 1: 25. "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

IN this paradoxical sentence Paul brings two great antagonistic ideas together to look each other in the face. They are always looking each other in the face. Between them all men and nations must choose and on that choice more depends than on any other. Out of it come the scale of values by which one lives, the quality, if not the fact, of one's intimacy with God, and the direction and final meaning of one's life.

There are no simpler or more popular religious ideas than those of the wisdom and the might of God. In the midst of the mysteries that surround us we are sure that He knows. We may be very ignorant and foolish. He is the All-wise, the All-seeing, the Omniscient. Even more emphasis do we put upon his powers. We may be weak and futile, but He is the Almighty, the Creator, the Omnipotent. The song of His power fills the Old Testament. He speaks and it is done. He founds His world upon the floods and lays the beams of His chambers in the waters. He takes up the isles as a very little thing. He summons all the stars by name and because he is strong in power not one is absent from the roll-call. In our day

reverent science takes up the tale. Where the Hebrews told of His power in the dimensions of their tiny world, reverent science tells it in the dimensions of an infinite universe. There are no simpler or more popular religious notions than these of the wisdom and the power of God.

But sooner or later these ideas get us into a lot of trouble. The stubborn facts of life do not square with them in any such way as to leave us a God we can respect. Nature is "red in tooth and claw." The story of the years is a tale of cruelty and tears. Babies die. Pestilences rage. "The strong years conquer us." At the turn of the road of the fairest life the chill and the silence of the tomb are waiting. Where is the wisdom of God in such a world? Where is His power?

Then into such a world comes Jesus. He plays in the streets of Nazareth and its nearby fields. He looks on the beauty of hill and dale, and sings of lilies and of birds. He toils at the wholesome work of the carpenter, loves the smell of virgin wood, takes pride in the honorable exchange of services by which food and warmth and clothing are brought to the little home. He delights in power—power to labor, power to make things. He is physically competent. Indeed he often gives health to the sick and strength to the weak. But by and by, how soon we do not know, he meets evil—the misunderstanding of relatives, the opposition of Rome, the persecution of officials, the jeers of the mob, and at last the betrayal by a friend and the denial by a chum, Gethsemane, the

mocking judgment hall, the cruel cross and the rock-cut tomb sealed by Imperial Rome. What a queer universe! Where is the wisdom of God? Where is His power? The bewilderment of the women early at the tomb with no better thought than to anoint him for his long sleep and the sadness of the men who walked to Emmaus raise questions for which our common thought of the wisdom and the power of God suggests no answers.

Then what's the matter? Perhaps we are on the wrong track. Perhaps we need to redefine our terms. Perhaps we have got to rebuild our fundamental conceptions. Perhaps in the great choice we have chosen wrongly. Maybe the power and the wisdom of God that we have been thinking about are not his real power and wisdom. Maybe he is wise with another wisdom and strong with another strength.

There *are* other wisdoms and powers in the world. They are not physical at all. There is the wisdom and power of beauty. There is the wisdom and power of truth. There is the wisdom and power of goodness. There is the wisdom and power of character. Here are things that you cannot measure by yards or by light years. You cannot weigh them with milligrams or tons. You cannot analyze them with test tube or spectroscope. You cannot buy or sell them. They are not quoted on any stock exchange. Perhaps this universe is not made in the interests of comfort, money, thrones. Perhaps it is made in the inter-

ests of beauty, truth, goodness. Perhaps character is the great concern. Perhaps this is the way to understand the wisdom and power of God. That is a different matter.

I

It is these two great basic ideas that Paul brought together in our text to look each other in the face. They are always looking each other in the face. Each claims the victory. Each thinks itself strong and calls the other weak. What a noise those who hold to the first idea are always making. They control great newspapers—or should I call them *large*—and make them their mouth pieces. The only interpretation of history they know anything about is the economic. They talk of "the bottom line" in the same hushed tones that others use of the Deity. They measure national greatness by square miles and dollars and guns. They keep their powder dry but trust no God except the God of battles. They prattle of moral obligations as nice things for women and children and Sunday school picnics but would blush to their toe-tips if ever caught keeping company with one. They never mention idealism except to sneer at it as folly and weakness and they make the term idealist synonymous with fool. It is a cult of power, but power here always means physical strength and comfort. Moreover they so persuade us all that they often trick us

into giving the game away by letting them wear the name of "realists."

Those who hold the other idea are quieter. They seldom strive or cry aloud in the street. But from many a studio there are those who tell us that beauty is more real and worth while than any of these things and that they are happier in their poverty than kings on their thrones. From many a laboratory scientists look up to say that truth is more lovely, precious and repaying than the riches of Crœsus and the power of Napoleon. From many a school and many a church—thank God, we can more and more name these two together—there come voices to say that goodness is the final test and character the only reality that counts. These two basic ideas are always facing each other.

II

Nor do they face each other only in vague and disembodied forms. They meet in the heart when a man makes a mean business deal profiting him in physical comfort, money and power and yet at the same time finds something rising in him to make him wonder if it was not a bad bargain after all. They meet in the clerk who has a chance to cheat his employer with no possibility of being caught and chooses honor, counting it better to be able to look in his eyes in the glass than to have a new car. They met in John Hay when he gave back the Boxer indemnity and remained un-

troubled while Europe talked of "shirt-sleeve diplomacy" and called him a fool and a weakling. They met on the deck of the *Titanic* when the great slogan of heroism at sea rang out in the night, "Women and children first!" and men full of the love of life put the wives and children of other men into the boats and went to death content. Character and materialism, the wisdom and power of character and the wisdom and power of force—these are always facing each other and are always in conflict.

But once they met supremely. Once they came in conflict when each was raised to the highest terms. They met in Palestine. They met in Jerusalem. They met on Calvary. Why at his trial did Jesus not meet argument with argument, searing and withering Annas and Caiphas and Pilate with such burning words as his woes against the scribes and Pharisees show he knew how to speak? Why not that instead of standing there in silence? Why did he not call tens of thousands of angels to avenge him? Why did he give no word or deed in answer to the taunt flung up to him on the cross, "He saved others, himself he cannot save!"? Why no acceptance of the challenge, "Let him now come down from the cross and we will believe"? Pilate's wife had told her husband of a troubling dream. But Pilate was too practical to pay attention long. What a fool Jesus was!

Yes, but by and by Paul takes up the very words men that day thought and gave them new

meaning, "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." That is Paul's way of saying that the final meaning of our world is not found in horse power or revolutions per minute. The final meaning of our world is found in character. The world is a school of character. Safety is not first. Sacrificial service is first. Men are not pleasure-seeking beasts. Men are heroes. You never solve life's riddle by running from pain. To call evil an illusion is no escape. That is only to change the name. The illusion is then the evil. The only way is to face the loss, the sickness, the weakening, the fading, the death, and see them through, transforming them into good by making them schools of character and opportunities for service. "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

III

But was Paul right? Was Jesus right? There are many hints that they were. There is a hint in the vague discomfort that comes to you when you play the game altogether according to the standards of the world. There is a hint in the song that sings itself in your heart when you do put character above comfort, wealth and power. There is a hint when John Hay's generosity does more for American prestige in China, proves itself more mighty, than anything battleships or

regiments have done. There is a hint in the shout that goes up from the conscience of the world when Archie Butt chooses death at the *Titanic's* rail.

But were Paul and Jesus right? Take the question where the greatest test and the sublimest adventure have been made. Take it to Palestine. Take it to Jerusalem. Take it to Golgotha. This is Easter Day. The helplessness of the women so early at the tomb and the sadness of the men on the way to Emmaus did have an answer. Oh, I know there are mysteries enough. I know the risen body was different from that which worked at the carpenter's bench. Never before did Jesus enter a room with the door shut. I know he did not come back as you and I would probably have asked—to take up again the struggle with Pilate and the Pharisees on their own terms and to confound them. It was only to friends and lovers that he came back. But to them he did return. To them he showed that neither the wisdom of Jerusalem nor the power of Rome was strong enough to vanquish him, "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

Unless our whole universe is crazy there is nothing else to explain why Mary, desolately weeping at the tomb, suddenly came running to the disciples crying, "I have seen the Lord"; why the friends who "had hoped" in him but given it all up, the disciples who after his death had no better plan than to go back to their Galilean fish-

ing, the apostles who had been wont to quarrel about sitting on thrones, presently went forth to make disciples of the crucified among all nations with a joy and victory in their hearts that no pain, no loneliness, no persecution, no martyrdom ever could abate; why Peter, who had cried "Far be it from thee" when Jesus first foretold his suffering and drawn a sword to smite the servant of the High Priest, later gloried in his own martyrdom. Jerusalem has long been nothing but a football of the nations. The power of Imperial Rome is but a troubled memory. Palestine is across many lands and oceans. Calvary is nineteen centuries away. But to-day we join our hearts and voices with those of an innumerable host and sing,

"The strife is o'er, the battle done."

"Ten thousand times ten thousand
In sparkling raiment bright
The armies of the ransomed saints
Throng up the steps of light."

"Crown Him with many crowns."

"Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

This life is a school of character. Our business is to turn evil into good. "Whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away. Whether there be tongues, they shall cease. Whether there

be knowledge, it shall be done away." Whether there be societies and governments, sciences and popularities, powers and fortunes, they shall be done away. But "Love never faileth," "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." Which side do you choose?

XV: OUR PATRIOT DEAD

A Memorial Day Sermon

Lam. 3: 20. "My soul hath them still in remembrance and is bowed down within me."

THERE are few figures of speech more constantly useful than the figure of the swinging pendulum. It has become the illustration of our most human tendency in abandoning one extreme to fly to the opposite, in deserting one error to swing so far away as to fall into another error equal if not greater.

The coming of Memorial Day is a perfect example of this. The institution of war never had so poor standing among us as it has now. Its waste, its cruelty, its injustice, its futility all condemn it. The one publicist who came out of the war with any large right to say, "I told you so," is Norman Angell. His pre-war book, "The Great Illusion," attacks the assumption that it is possible for any nation to make war and then exact payment from its foes. Fundamental economic laws make that impossible. In a great war, like a great strike, all parties lose. When now we look at the present status of international finance, the nature of the so-called debt settlements, the relative standing of German bonds, we see that on the material side war is indeed a great illusion. Then when from this lowest but most

concrete plane we move up to considerations of what war does to human life, to morals, to the spirit of good will, and the great gulf that always lies between its promises and its accomplishments, we cannot wonder at the present low standing of the institution of war in the mind of the world. It is especially the gulf between its promises and its accomplishments that has made the last years years of disillusionment. People everywhere are taking up the same language that Norman Angell used in his "Great Illusion."

That the pendulum in this country has taken a big swing is sufficiently demonstrated by the fate of Defense Day. You remember that the War Department wanted an annual Mobilization Day on which to rally the nation to a war basis. The word "Defense" sugared the pill, but from all over the country protests poured in that such saber-rattling on the part of the strongest and safest government on earth was bound to put the emphasis in the wrong place and create a serious misapprehension abroad. From the heart of China our own missionary, Paul Reynolds, wrote his passionate sympathy with these protests. And now the United States government has found it good policy to abandon the scheme. The President has said the day shall be continued only with the approval of Congress and everybody knows that that is equal to saying that the day shall be abandoned. Into at least that much disrepute has the institution of war fallen.

But though the pendulum swings from the

former extreme and though from that extreme some of us long to push it, there is another extreme to which we must not let it swing. We hate fire. The siren of the fire engines at night and the lurid sky put horror in our hearts. We organize against fire, as sometime we shall organize against war. We insure against fire, as in some way we shall presently insure against war. We put pyromaniacs in jail and rate arson as a heinous crime, as sometime we shall restrain the war instigators and outlaw war as the most monumental social crime on earth. But with all this good sense and sound law about fire, we should but dishonor ourselves if we did not honor the courage, the devotion, the sacrifice of our firemen. On Wacker Drive in Chicago the other night I passed a scene of horror. Glass, bolts, nuts, fenders, tires, were strewn all over the street while a sprawling, crumpled chassis lay with its wheels turned toward the sky. I learned that a careless driver had gotten in the way of a fire truck and a fireman had had his brains dashed out against a steel pillar. Surely our hatred of fire must not trick us into forgetting the character of that plain man who did all he could to prevent fire, all he could to extinguish fire, and in our service met his death.

I

We believe our soldiers never ought to have had to die any more than that fireman ought to have

been killed. We hate war. We have got to build a fireproof world even if to do it we have to change the elementary materials out of which the world is built, even if we have to change the inmost hearts of men. But shame on us, if while we are busy at that we forget the dutifulness, the idealism, the courage, the pain, the sacrifice, of our patriot dead. In the Harry Elkins Widner Memorial Library at my University I stood the other day before the symbolic war paintings on the grand stairway. One tells how happy is the youth who in one embrace can enfold both liberty and death. The other pictures college boys marching to the battle front and, as they go, stretching out their fingers to touch the fingers of shrouded mothers who stand by the wayside holding their little children. Then in that same building I went and stood before the roll of the Harvard dead and read down the column until I came to the names of my own classmates. That noon I lunched with a classmate and told him of the billows of woe that went over me in that Library as I thought how little the war has yet given the world of the things for which those men had died. He looked far away in silence and then said, "True. They have not yet gotten the things for which they died. But you know I was Dean of Harvard all through those war years. I talked with most of our men as they went. They were great boys."

That is the spirit of the true Memorial Day.

In the very name of our dead we gird ourselves against war. We pledge ourselves to work for the day when such things shall be nothing but a horrid memory of the night. But meanwhile we remember that they were great boys and we crave some of their greatness for ourselves.

And why were they great? They were great because they knew duty and obeyed—not pleasure, for it was not pleasant; not comfort, for it was not comfortable; not ease, for it was not easy; not safety, for it was not safe; not swiftly repaying expediency, but duty! There is no greatness without that. Psychiatrists tell us that many neurotics were better off in the trenches than they had been at home. They had escaped the pettiness and triviality of common life. They had found duty. The skepticism we now feel about war as an instrument of right cannot blind us to the fact that these patriot dead of the Civil, the Spanish and the World War had found their vision of duty and given themselves completely to it.

It is well to memorialize that greatness for we all need it. For the most part when duty conflicts with pleasure what happens? What happens when it conflicts with comfort or ease or safety or expediency? Honestly, in your life and mine what happens most often then? Why! if Jesus had been like us we never would have heard of him!

"Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do . . ."

When duty, "stern daughter of the voice of God," has spoken,

> "'Tis man's perdition to be safe
> When for the truth he ought . . ."

Oh, what transformations would come into our common living if we were all like that! What security and well-being would appear in the seething world of business! What wholesomeness would come into our recreational life that now is so often poisonous! What character would appear in our soft and comfortable homes! What health would come to our civic and national affairs if we dethroned self-interest and cunning calculation of short-time expediency, and, like our patriot dead, put on the throne instead, stern, eternal duty!

II

But I have clipped these quotations.

> "Theirs not to reason why,
> Theirs but to do and *die.*"

> "'Tis man's perdition to be safe
> When for the truth he ought to *die.*"

Life was sweet to them. No disease had lessened its zest. They were picked because they were strong and well. No cruel years had wearied them. They were in the freshness of youth. Few of them knew the shrinkage of life that comes from hopes defeated. They were dreaming radiant

dreams. But even with life so sweet they had found something dearer than life. It was Satan who said, "All that a man hath will he give for his life." It was Jesus who said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Many were the emotions with which we stood on the railway platforms and watched the boys go off, but this perhaps was the deepest element of the awe that fell on us in such hours:—these youth had found something more precious than life, something for which they were ready to give life. Our patriots of whom we think most to-day are those who did give life.

> "What were our lives without thee?
> What all our lives to save thee?
> We reck not what we gave thee:
> We will not dare to doubt thee,
> But ask whatever else, and we will dare!"

To remind us of such greatness is not the least value of Memorial Day.

But does this greatness belong only to our patriot dead? It is fitting that as we celebrate the grateful memory of those who went forth we think especially of those who "went and who returned not." Of them it is right that the newspapers, the speeches, the thoughtful converse of the street are all full. For them no words can be too glowing and no flowers too beautiful. But after all, it was not the dying that made them patriots. They were patriots long before. Death at the battle front had nothing to do with it. That was only

the proof, not at all the essence of their worth. What made them patriots was that they valued their land above themselves long before they died for it. What made them patriots was the full-hearted devotion that lay back of their enlistment, the love that kept them calm in a thousand perils of death. Many who returned were just as brave, just as noble, just as patriotic as those who died in smoke and blood. Many such gave their lives to their country just as fully as many of the soldiers now buried in an unmarked trench.

If this greatness was as possible and as necessary for the soldiers who returned untouched as for our patriot dead, so is it possible and necessary for civilians. "Peace hath its victories no less than war." Peace has its struggles no less than war. After all it is only these victories and struggles that give us a country worth dying for. We enjoy it. We use it. We ask it to do things for us. We find the government very convenient under which to profit, to rest, to play. We criticize it when it does badly. We blame it when its wheels do not run smoothly or it asks something which is against our taste. But not till we love it, not till we serve it, not till we are ready to die for it that it may be truly great and truly good and truly beautiful, not till then are we worthy of it or of its patriot dead. Give us a citizenry like that—and we have little right to thrill over our patriot dead unless at the same time we are dedicating ourselves to be such a citizenry—give us this great and costly citizenship and our national

shames will be wiped away. No longer will over fifty percent of our voters stay home from the polls. America will become that fair land that God intends and from it peace and healing and blessing will flow out into the world.

III

But more. This greatness of our patriot dead points the way to all good citizenship. It also points the way to all good character. Jesus walked for months, if not for years, with the shadow of death just a little way ahead. His crucifixion was significant not in its physical pain and horror. It was significant because it expressed a devotion he had long since found, a devotion to something dearer than life. And Jesus said, "He that does not take up his cross daily and follow me is not worthy of me." He counted no life worthily lived that is not daily lived in a devotion that is truly greater than itself, a devotion that if faced with the alternatives would choose death with a shout. Death! Cold, dark death!—God has put something in the heart that dreads it. In Gethsemane we see that dread on Jesus. But Memorial Day is more than a day to praise our heroes. It sets us searching our own hearts. Peace reigns. But do we love our country as they did? The classic martyr age of the church seems to be passed. But what would we die for? How many things and of what kind? Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay

down his life now and here. "He that doth not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me."

Who won the war? The unknown soldier in Arlington Cemetery and the great company he represents who knew duty and loved their country more than self. Who made America great? The unknown citizens who among the privileges of living in America have honored the duties of citizenship and cared more for country than for self. Who made the church great? The unknown Christians who daily laid down their lives for it. What is the hope of religion in the world? The unknown men and women who daily take up the cross and follow Him in self-forgetting, self-sacrificing love. "My soul hath them still in remembrance and is bowed down within me."

XVI: IS THE MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE FOOLISH?

Matthew 22: 42. "What think ye of Christ?"

TWICE in the last two months I have heard a distinguished traveler telling of his explorations in the heart of Africa. Both times the large audience listening to him was made up of men and women who for the most part would be regarded as exceptionally highly chosen, as unusually intelligent and well informed. Each time the explorer told of tribes seldom, if ever, visited by white men; recorded the beautiful courtesy that the natives showed to him, to his wife, to his little daughter and to all his companions, even in the midst of cannibal tribes; noted the general happiness and comfort of the natives; and expressed a strongly skeptical opinion about missionary work, suggesting that our best treatment of these natives is to leave them alone, except, of course, for teaching them how to live better. This was an interesting disclosure of the explorer's mind. But in each case something yet more interesting followed. A chuckle ran around the audience, followed by scattering applause. Clearly the speaker had struck a responsive note. Clearly many of these intelligent and well informed hearers regarded the mission-

ary enterprise as foolish and foolish to the point of humor.

The experience was not soon to be forgotten and it suggested a number of important questions. Before we ask a jury to settle problems for us we go to the pains to see that they are just as well informed as possible on all the evidence. Before we know how much importance to attach to the opinion of these audiences that the missionary enterprise is foolish to the point of humor, we need to learn how well informed they are about that enterprise. You have all heard the old story about the great tiger hunter who, after visiting India, declared that there are no Christians in all that great realm. He had been there and seen none. A Christian bishop replied that there are no tigers in India. He had been there and seen none. It is a question of what you look for. And it is not merely a question of what is going on in foreign lands. It is a question whether the jury is well informed as to the present spirit and policies of the missionary undertaking.

I

It is a common experience in this parish, as I suppose it is in others, to meet people who say they cannot possibly have anything to do with this church, and who, when asked why, give as reasons things that have no more to do with this church than the binomial theorem has to do with the taste of fudge! They are talking about some church

they knew forty years ago and four hundred miles away. Nevertheless, it is practically impossible to get it out of their heads that they are talking about this church. There are those so well acquainted with the teaching of this pulpit that they do not need to come to church except on Easter, and I have heard some of them attribute to this pulpit religious language and opinions that have never, to my knowledge, been expressed in this place. Religious prejudice and provincialism are gruesome and stubborn things. If we have to watch out for them in an institution right here under our own noses, how much more do we need to watch out for them when we come to consider a world-wide enterprise stretching far beyond our horizon?

To be more specific, I am sure if I knew nothing more about the foreign missionary enterprise than what some Sunday school teachers and others were trying to give me in my boyhood, if I carried the teaching then offered unmodified through the many years between so that the moment this explorer mentioned missions nothing but this distant picture came to my mind, I would applaud him and applaud him to the echo, although I am not sure that I would chuckle. I knew some teachers and some writers who pictured the foreign missionary as a man who forces himself into places where he is not wanted, who denounces every local custom he discovers as altogether evil, hell-born and Satan-made, who attempts to force upon the natives customs that are detestable

to them, and who finds his motive in the conviction that unless he or some one does these things these millions of natives are traveling swiftly to eternal torment. In my home town there used to stand the oldest theological seminary in America. In the famous Andover controversy that shook our Congregational churches far more than the present fundamentalist controversy is shaking them, I heard not a little of those—although they were not on the seminary faculty—who felt that any modification of this motive would "cut the nerve of missions." And I wonder, I wonder how much of the present apathy and opposition to the missionary enterprise that one finds in cultivated people is due to a religious provincialism that still pictures missions in this outworn way.

I wish I knew where to find the intellectual dynamite to blast this idea forever out of the popular mind. Honesty requires the admission that there are some sections of the churches that still hold to it and that it may find lodgment in some missionary boards. But I, for one, am done with it and I am done with it for no less a reason than that it implies a God in whom I do not believe. No one who knew my father for ten minutes could ever suspect that he would be willing to consign millions of his fellow beings to eternal torment just because they had never had one single chance to hear the name of Jesus. And if I believe anything about God, I believe that he is a Father, and the Fatherhood in heaven must be as good as the fatherhood on earth.

II

But enough of negation. Let us look at some of the things that must be in the mind of the jury before it can justly decide that missions are foolish to the point of humor. The first thing is a common-place, but a common-place so common that we seldom realize more than two percent of its meaning. I refer to the shrinkage of our modern world. Those who wish to read the signs of the times, those who are willing to see the footsteps of the Almighty in current events, will do well to ponder how many of the major inventions of the last hundred years have all worked to bring men nearer together. That has seldom been the conscious motive of the inventors. Men have been grasping for power, making money, mastering nature, harnessing its resources. They have not said, "We want brotherhood and therefore we will devise the steam engine, build the railroad, fashion the steamship, invent the telegraph and telephone and radio, weave the intricate fabric of modern commerce and perfect the automobile." But all these things have tended to bring men together, to make them aware of each other, to require that they regard each other, to make our world compact. The stage is set for brotherhood! It looks as if God were in it! When Russia stopped buying Indian tea it threw our Southern cotton market into gloom. When Occidental women and girls began bobbing their hair, it brought tens of thousands of women and children in China to the edge of starvation. When Stanley

took employment under a great New York newspaper, he carried letters two years old to Livingstone in the heart of Africa. To-day London is in touch with that same region in just one quarter of a second. A friend of mine prophesies that in ten years the home offices of the missionary boards will talk with all their workers around the world once every week. The influenza of 1918, that slew more Americans than the World War, had an Asiatic origin. The partial names that men use for one another see all their meaning oozing away. Meanwhile, the word "Humanity" has a content richer than it ever knew before.

Parallel to this, and in no small part because of it, the missionary enterprise has changed. I have admitted that in some minds it has not changed, but in most of the great boards it has changed greatly. Any jury must take account of these changes. If it does not, it is as provincial as a modern manufacturer making automobiles on the basis of the market of twenty years ago.

We have begun to discover good in all men. We have begun to overtake the ancient missionary who said that God had not left himself without witness in any people. India is a tremendous witness to spirit as the ultimate reality. In animistic Africa a school girl lately prayed, "O thou great chief, light a candle within our hearts that we may see what is in them, and sweep the rubbish from that dwelling place." Few Christian children or adults ever pray a better prayer than that! Paul Reynolds, our missionary in

China, says that he is just a mediator and just as anxious to mediate the Orient to the Occident, as to mediate the Occident to the Orient. The spirit of denunciation is dying. The modern missionary, like Jesus, comes not to destroy but to fulfill.

Moreover, the enterprise has become many, many sided. Paul Reynolds, with the help of our young people, bought his playground for Chinese children and then beats everybody in sight at tennis. Clarence Wolsted, our missionary in India, administers a leper colony and turns it from Gehenna into Paradise, and, with the help of our Men's Class, puts his experiences as a farmer's boy of Wisconsin to work in India to build a new agriculture as a bulwark against those famines which too often turn India into a morgue.

III

Contemporary with these changes, the center of gravity of missionary work has been shifting. When Clarence Wolsted went to India, the American Board in Boston refused to determine in advance just what would be his type of work. They said that must be settled on the field. And not only is the center of gravity shifting from the home base to the foreign field, but it is actually shifting from the missionary workers to the natives. Professor Fleming points out that there is a new kind of sacrifice for the modern missionary. His sacrifice is less and less the perils of travel, the distance from dear ones, the isolation of a lonely work. It is more and more the

sacrifice of founding and nurturing a work and then stepping aside and surrendering it into other hands. I quote from the last letter that has come from Mr. Reynolds to the ministers of this church. "It means that the steps towards the evolution of the missionary which have been talked about for a number of years are actually being made in Fenchow. I, myself, have the hope that with this unusual group of leaders at Fenchow, we may become somewhat of an experiment station, and if successful, an example to see what can be done when the responsibility is actually in the hands of the Chinese. This does not mean, however, that there is no place for the foreigner. As I see it, and as many other foreigners far better able to judge see the matter, and as our Chinese colleagues state their view, there is a very large place for the foreigner as co-worker and a free advisor. I myself feel that the real place of the missionary can be fully as large and much more to my taste with this new arrangement. I do not like to handle money and make decisions and determine affairs, especially when dealing with another people in a foreign land. I find the fruitful contacts are not these mentioned above, but rather those which come through free intercourse; through sitting together on committees while we discuss things and when we meet as equals and co-workers in planning and carrying out our work. I find the Chinese are much more ready to open up their hearts as soon as it is evident that I have no power and no authority and no control in policy and money matters." That is the sort of thing

that is happening on all the greater missionary fields. In the light of it what becomes of that old phrase about "forcing our religion on the natives,"—a cry which always contained a complete contradiction of terms. True religion cannot be forced.

IV

We state a great many of these things in a different way and yet go beyond them all when we note what is perhaps the most significant thing of the present hour, the wide cleavage that exists in thoughtful minds throughout the world between what we call civilization and him whom we call Christ. The war helped here. One thing that it did bring was a wholesome humility. We have learned to say that a civilization that can do a thing like that is a civilization itself at war with Christ, and China, Japan and India are learning to say the same thing. But in large part the war was just a symptom of things lying behind it. Back of it dwelt a great unchristian philosophy of international and national life. Back of it dwelt a social life, and an economic life, and a political life, themselves largely unchristian. We are too much shamed by these things any longer to take that patronizing "holier-than-thou" attitude to which we once were so much tempted. Nor should we get a hearing if we did. Our missionaries used to like to argue for Christianity on the ground that our material comfort, industrial greatness and political power are largely the result of our religion. The missionary who

tries that to-day is likely to be laughed out of court by those who speak back to him, saying, "Your material comfort has dulled your souls. Your industrial greatness costs too much in human wreckage. Your political power is a threat against us and likely to be your doom. We don't want your civilization, but, oh, that Christ, that companion of little children, that pitier of womanhood, that friend of publicans and sinners, that teacher of the sermon on the mount, that teller of the parable of the prodigal son, that lover of men, who, having loved his own, loved them unto the end and then for them went even unto Calvary and then came back to make them strong and free, tell us, tell us and show us more of him!"

So there has come about this change. The frontier is not what it used to be. The missionary frontier is no longer geographical or racial. It does not run between England and India, or between America and Japan. It does not separate the black from the white, or the white from the yellow. It runs between Christ and everything else. It runs *through* England and *through* America. It runs *through* the white race as much as through the yellow and the black. It runs through every office, shop and store, through every government and school, and even through every Christian heart!

v

Leave them alone? My charming African explorer would leave them alone except for teaching

them to live better. For the moment I waive the point that the missionary enterprise is more definitely set than anything else in the world to teach them to live better through hospital and school and agriculture. But will politics leave them alone? Will commerce leave them alone? Get out your map of Africa and study its colors and tell me whether politics will leave Africa alone. Remember what the rubber trade meant in the Congo under the Christian king, Leopold. Let Harry Ward tell you how much of the recent disturbances in China were due to Western industrialists who thought there were no Ten Commandments east of Suez and knew there were no laws for the protection of women and children. I remember something in the voice of Harry Emerson Fosdick when he told me of being waked morning after morning at four o'clock in China to hear the rap, rap, rap of the wooden shoes of little children going to work from daylight to dark in foreign silk mills. We talk of the Yellow Peril. Perhaps we do well to talk of it. But who made the Yellow Peril? There was no such thing in all the world until the whites gave the yellows a dose of militarism. Who made the Yellow Peril? Is this leaving them alone?

You cannot neglect this frontier anywhere, this frontier that no more runs between continent and continent or race and race, but between Christ and everything else. I have on my shelves the reports of the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910. For 1928 a similar conference is planned, but it is everywhere agreed that to call

it by the same name would be a tragedy. It must be a World *Christian* Conference, for the old frontiers are gone. The real frontier is the Christian frontier and upon that frontier we all are standing.

"What think ye of Christ?" You cannot think one thing at one part of the frontier and another at another. All along the line the question, "Is the missionary enterprise foolish?" resolves itself into the question, "What think ye of Christ?" Out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks. The ideas and ideals that dwell in the hearts of a people are the real determining forces of that people's life. Do you know anything better than the Sermon on the Mount? Do you know anything better than the idea of God and our relationship to Him given in the story of the prodigal son? Do you know anything better than the influence of Jesus on the hearts of men, anything giving a higher, surer hope that at last we shall have a common life upon this earth, pure, honest, brotherly, and joyous? To whom else do you so gladly commit your children? Well, what's good at one point of the frontier is good at another. If it's good for your children, it's good for all children everywhere. It is one frontier and it runs through every human life, and when we step up to that frontier and ask, "Is the missionary enterprise foolish?" the answer is another question, "What think ye of Christ?"

XVII: GOOD WISHES FOR GRADUATES

At a Secondary School Graduation

IN this little sheaf of good wishes you will find no mention of happiness. That is not because I want you unhappy but because it seems rather stupid to wish you happiness without first naming the things on which it must depend. Neither will you find any mention here of good health or of material prosperity. This is not because I wish any of you to be invalids or to die in the poor-house. It is because my sheaf is only a little one and there is room in it only for the things that are really important.

But, although I wish the poor-house for none of you, I wish poverty for all. Only you must remember that poverty is a relative thing. I once knew a good woman who was rich on $125.00 a year. Every want was met and every impulse expressed. We have all known persons of vastly greater income who yet felt themselves to be poor. Poverty is not having nearly enough to meet your wants and express your desires. That is what I wish for you.

For think how unfortunate is the man who escapes this kind of poverty. Most men do not escape it. Most men know what it is to plan carefully and struggle hard in their economic lives. To escape poverty is to be a stranger to one of

the great interpretive human experiences. It is to be lonely among other men. When you look at the great, toiling, sweating world you want to know what it is all about. When you see the boy or girl scorning delights and living laborious days in order to get an education, you want to be able to understand something of that experience. When you see father and mother postponing their long-earned rest that by their sacrifice they may keep the children a little longer at school, you want to be able to feel what it means to them. You do not want to be outside the great common experiences of life. You want to be inside. I wish you personal wants and generous plans that are beyond your means. I wish you poverty.

I

I wish you temptation. It is something we fear. We do well to recognize that it brings with it the possibility of the ultimate tragedy of life. Jesus has voiced our fear of it. He taught us to pray, "Lead us not into temptation." Yes, and there are temptations that we can wish for no one. But God does not lead us into them. It is men who lead us. There are man-made temptations that no human being was ever meant to undergo. There are business houses and political situations where men have arranged it that the hope of advancement is practically denied to any who are not ready to sell their virtue or their honor. To

make an end of such temptations is one of the first duties of the Christian. Nevertheless, temptation is so essential to moral growth that we may frankly wish it for each other. Jesus attained to his great goal in no other way. The untempted soul is, by definition, the unaspiring soul. The goal of our living is not innocence but victory. The finished man is the man who has fought. A veteran is worth more than a raw recruit. It is recorded that after slaying a particularly strong and brave enemy some savages tear out that enemy's heart and eat it. It is their belief that thereby the strength and courage of the slain enemy will enter into them. Gruesome and fanciful as the custom is, it suggests a solid truth upon a higher plane. The strength of every temptation that you overcome becomes henceforth your permanent possession. I wish you temptation.

Was the trial sore?
Temptation sharp? Thank God a second time!
Why comes temptation but for man to meet
And master, and make crouch beneath his feet
And so be pedestaled in triumph? Pray
"Lead us into no such temptation, Lord!"
Yea, but, O Thou whose servants are the bold,
Lead such temptations by the head and hair,
Reluctant dragons, up to who dares fight,
So that he may do battle and have praise.

II

I wish you doubt. This again is something that we pray against and something that we fear.

There is beauty in the life of untroubled faith. There is appeal in those serene natures who easily believe all the great and beautiful things that are offered to their minds. But a faith that has never been troubled is usually a weak faith. It is the faith that has been troubled and has overcome that is strong. Lyman Abbott is reported to have asked not for a faith that cannot be shaken, but for a faith that can be shaken without falling.

But doubt is not only the establishment of faith. It is the portal of progress. I wish a wise man would some time give us a book on "The Function of Heresy in the Advancement of Mankind." Once men believed that all human intercourse must be dominated by force. Jesus doubted that, and that doubt was a part of the heresy that sent him to the Cross out of which has come the higher life of mankind. Once men believed that all truth was locked in the keeping of a single church. Luther doubted that. Out of that doubt has come the rich and varied life of Protestantism. Once men believed that monarchy is the divinely appointed human government. Men like Cromwell and Washington doubted it, and out of their doubt has come the surge of modern democracy. Once men believed that slavery was a divine institution. Men like Garrison and Lincoln doubted it, and because of that doubt a new race was started on the long and perilous path to freedom.

Just so, if we are to attain progressive usefulness in the world, if we are to be something more than bits of freight floating along the stream of

human life, we must learn to doubt. Some people believe that their country can by no possibility do any wrong. Germany may be wrong, England may be wrong, Russia may be wrong, but our country,—never! I wish for you a patriotism big enough to doubt that. Some believe that since wars have ever been, wars must ever be; that although men progress in every other way, there is no hope of progress here. I should like to have you doubt that. Some believe that although social and industrial systems have been forever changing and the past is full of revolutions, we, in this particular age, have reached the final social and industrial forms of society. There never can be anything better than our present way of doing things in spite of our inequalities, our hatreds and our social exploitations. I should like to have you doubt that. I wish you doubt which is the handmaid of faith and the key to usefulness.

III

I wish you failure. I wish it because nobody really succeeds without it. It would be instructive to make a catalogue of the failures of great men. What disasters overtook George Washington! What disappointments wrung the heart of Abraham Lincoln! Cavour made modern Italy, giving to it unity and liberty, but if you cut out about every other chapter of his life, what remains reads like the record of abject failure. Louis Pasteur was beaten again and again before he did that

work which founded modern medicine. It was because these men were willing to fail to-day, to-morrow and next day, and then get up and go right on failing for weeks and months and years, that at last their names were written high in the memory of the race. By every human standard Jesus failed. When they snuffed out that life upon the hill and buried that heart in the rock and sealed the door with the official seal of Rome, it seemed to his scattered and affrighted friends that the greatest failure of the years had been completed. To-day that failure is the hope of the world.

It must, however, be observed that these men did not fail because they were incompetent. Each one was a master in his sphere. These men did not fail because they had stopped struggling. There is in their record no excuse for mediocrity or cowardice. These men failed because they were attempting something surpassingly great. That is the sort of failure that I wish for you. How often are our boastings of success nothing but the pronouncement of our doom. They really disclose how little we are attempting, how easily we are satisfied. If we are not attempting things so great that every day we walk on the brink of failure, and often do fail in very truth, we are not yet attempting things big enough for the lives of Christian men and women.

I wish you poverty. I wish you temptation. I wish you doubt. I wish you failure.

XVIII: MEMORY AND RENEWAL

Sermon Preached in Appleton Chapel at Harvard, at the Opening of the Twenty-fifth Reunion of the Class of 1900.

EVER since the moment of glad surprise when I found that after all I was to attend this Reunion, I have been trying to make clear to myself just what this week may mean. I have not done better than the two words, "Memory" and "Renewal." During these days together in places now both so familiar and so strange, often recollected things will grip us with new power and long forgotten things will live again in memory, and we shall find many times and places when it will seem incredible that some absentees will never come again. And through these days because of old places and old companionships, because of these memories of our own youth, and because we, mature men, are surrounded by the youth of a younger and better generation, some things in us either dead or like to die will be renewed—some thoughts, some hopes, some plans.

Of course, all this may be useless or actually ignoble. All this may be mere sentimentality or the reawakening of evil that we thought long since outgrown. But on the other hand, all this may be chastening, ennobling, making this week memorable in our soul histories and prophetic of great

good to humankind. Indeed few more significant things could possibly happen than for us men, twenty-five years out of college, standing high among the favored of this earth, close to the zenith of our powers, seasoned by long experience in the ways of the world, holding dominant places in the affairs of the day, to find through the memories that crowd upon us this week a renewal of the venturesomeness and idealism that were ours twenty-five years ago. When we left college we thought that we were ready to remake the world. But we were wrong. We lacked experimental, first-hand knowledge of the world. The world had little trust in us, was even inclined to smile at us. We had won no place or station and few had place or station prepared for them. Now all that is changed. We are experienced. We are trusted. We are positioned. But what perfidy if meanwhile we have lost our idealism and spirit of adventure and become mere freight in the movement of human progress! "Memory and Renewal"—this is the highest possible meaning of this week.

I

How well we recall the discovery college brought us that all is not well in industry. Instead of being eternal, the present order is only an affair of yesterday. Instead of being just, it is full not only of inequalities that rest on human differences but also of whimsical inequalities of opportunity that have no reference whatsoever to real worth

and so are intrinsically unjust. If we have been living at all largely, the last twenty-five years must have deepened this impression. Walter Rathenau put it in his little book, "The New Society." He reminded us that there are men like the artists, the ministers, the creative business men, the teachers, the inventors, who never can get all the time they want to do their work. The days are too few and every hour is too short. But on the other hand are the great toiling masses, restless and insistent, whose demands upon analysis always turn out to be for shorter hours and less work. On the one hand a small group who love their work and on the other the great masses who hate it! Here is one of the primary problems of our time. In this one fact of the joylessness of work we have the certainty that the present order cannot last without radical transformation. Human nature will not stand it. We should be ashamed of our manhood if it would.

But shall a problem like this be left to the iconoclasts? Shall it be left to those who are stung and blinded by undoubted wrongs and who, seeing only the evil, are ready with the evil to sweep the good away? Shall such as we merely squeeze all we can out of things as they are and whisper, "After us the deluge"? To put joy into the work of the world, to give to all the joy of creation that now belongs only to the few—that is one of the fundamental necessities of our time. It is not for the preacher to say just how it shall be done, how to keep large-scale production with-

out turning the worker himself into a machine, how much or little the division of labor must yield to the diversification of the individual task, what industrial democracy may concretely mean. But the preacher may have the vision—the vision of all the men of 1900 who have any approach to this problem, either direct or indirect, going at it for the next quarter of a century with the wisdom and experience won during the last quarter and with the enthusiasm and audacity of twenty-five years ago!

II

But we do not have to go back twenty-five years to find the contrast of which I speak. There's been a war since we were in college. We did not make it. It was made by older men. But all of us felt its weight. Some of us fought it. Some of our best it killed. Then came the great disillusionment. The discrepancy between what the war promised and what it gave is so great that men can hardly stand it. To bridge this gulf they try all sorts of devices. They grossly exaggerate what good the war did do. They cry frantically for time and patience in the hope it will look better in perspective. Or they deny its idealism, say that we really were looking for but little and so when we get but little have no reason to complain but should be content.

But when memory is active we know this last device will not do. We did hope it was a "war to

end war." We did hope that out of it would come a new international order, a "parliament of man and federation of the world." So did we hope. So did the better boys of the nation hope. I know for I talked with them in the great camps. So did the men of 1900 hope, very gallant gentlemen, who "went and who returned not." And as we remember these things, as we remember *them,* is there any possible escape from ignominy except through renewal, the renewal of that noble purpose although now we have to seek in other ways the things that war was not able to give us? We are wiser than we were. We have had the instruction of the post-war years that was not given to our hero dead. For us war stands condemned in the supreme court of our time and convicted of the most heinous crime our thinking can conceive. It is condemned in the court of experience. It is convicted of futility and inefficiency.

For centuries the whole philosophy of history has been against war. Once none knew any way of living together except by the technique of force. Then within the family a better way was found. Once families knew no way of getting on with other families except by fighting them. Then within the clan a better way was found. The areas of coöperation steadily enlarged, from family to clan, from clan to tribe, from tribe to petty state, from such states to larger nations, from nations to empires. Step by step war has been pushed outside of ever enlarging concentric circles. One final step remains to be taken—to

push war outside humanity. As no generation that ever went before, we know that this must be done, lest the very forces we have created turn and overwhelm us. As no generation that ever went before, we know how this must be done—not by war; institutions seldom commit suicide—but by the knowledge and understanding made possible by modern travel and communication, by the catholic mind that dares to think in human terms, by the catholic heart that dares to be a citizen of the world, by the toilsome development of international institutions as once our States toilsomely developed our Federal Constitution.

Just one hour ago the honored President of this University was speaking in this pulpit and saying much these same things to the members of this year's graduating class. I submit that I have an even better audience than he. Boys do not make wars and boys cannot prevent them. But we are not boys any more. We are elders. Once more the need is just the same—to wed the wisdom and the power of maturity with the audacious enthusiasm and venturesomeness of youth.

III

I detain you for one more application. Perhaps you have already had opportunity to read our Class Report. It came to my house when a son of dear friends was there undergoing a terrible pneumonia. Through many hours of waiting by day and by night, that Report was my constant reading. Again and again, from direct statement

or by implication, I caught in it the characteristic hunger of the educated life of our time for a new grasp on spiritual reality.

Religion is both simpler and greater than when we were in college. Religion expresses itself in dogma. Then some identify it with dogma—as great a mistake as to identify the solar system with a book on astronomy. Religion expresses itself in ritual. Then some identify it with ritual—as foolish as to identify the Matterhorn with a picture of it. Religion expresses itself in ecclesiasticism. Then some identify it with ecclesiasticism—as if a family and the house it lives in were the same. Religion partially expresses itself in all these but is none of them. It is a way of life, a vital and present relationship to the Highest, a relationship of reverence and trust and free obedience. Since personality is the highest we know, personality must be the highest expression of the ultimate and the best person its divinest expression. So religion is more and more seen as the reverent, trusting, obedient following of Jesus. Donald Hankey said that religion is betting your life there is a God. He might have gone further and said that Christianity is betting your life there is a God as good as the Father that Jesus taught and trusted and made credible. It is not a theory of creation or a doctrine of Biblical inspiration or any metaphysical opinion. It is simpler and at the same time greater than any of these things that men can discuss and then forget. It is the militant following of One whose teaching and spirit touch life at every single point and to

go in whose direction is to go in the direction of God!

It is going to make a great difference whether we succeed in putting joy into the toil of the world. It is going to make a great difference whether we find a better way for governments to live together. It is going to make a great difference whether religion gets to be understood in the way I have been describing,—a way that shows our present denominationalism to be a crime and our present theological tempests to be irrelevant if not irreverent and that summons every one of us to the reproduction of the highest. You and I could not say much about these things twenty-five years ago. Now we enter the years when the dominant leadership is ours. We are experienced, trusted, positioned. We can assail sectarianism in ways of which it must take notice. We can insist that a certain Tennessee court-room and real religion have nothing whatever to do with each other. But we shall accomplish much only as our own living manifests the simplest and greatest conception of religion—the earnest and honest following of the Highest among the high.

The greatest years are just beginning. To memory add renewal that as the matured and seasoned men of 1900 presently return to their homes and their tasks they may go not only with the wisdom and the power that the last twenty-five years have brought them, but also with the bold enthusiasm and idealism that were theirs a quarter of a century ago.

XIX: MOUNTAIN CLIMBING

Luke 9: 28. "And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings that he took with him Peter and John and James, and went up into the mountain to pray."

HOW much we wish that Jesus had given us a fuller teaching concerning the practice of prayer. The disciples seem to have had a similar longing, for they once came to him, saying, "Teach us to pray." Luke tells us the Lord's prayer followed some exhortations to persistence in prayer. But then he passed swiftly on to other things. We may learn much from observing our Lord in prayer. If we study the words and the occasions of the prayers that he is known to have uttered, we shall be greatly instructed. But his positive directions concerning prayer seem not to have been voluminous. Indeed it almost seems that he was reticent about prayer as if he felt that prayer must spring so naturally out of the heart and be so determined by the person who offers it that it is not expedient to devote much time to discussing its manner. It is certain he dreaded lest the practice of prayer become formal, freezing into a hard, intolerant technique.

If we come humbly to our Lord like the disciples of old and say, "Lord, teach us to pray," and expect not only to listen to the direct answers that

he gives with his lips but also to learn from his total teaching and his own radiant religious life, it seems to me that this kind of tolerance about prayer, this dread of trying to force it all into one mold, this feeling that it must be the free and natural expression of the spirit, is about the first thing that we shall learn.

I

One of my summer occupations is scrambling over the White Mountains of New Hampshire. Of course the most regarded climb is Mt. Washington, the peak that stands at the center of the mountains, that towers above the rest, and from whose summit one may see three states stretching away like a map to the distant horizon. But one never climbs Mt. Washington by one trail without being aware that there are others. If one sleeps in the stone building at the summit or in any of the log cabins in the upper edges of the forest, the evening talk about the fire is sure to be of the different trails. Some start far away, are long and for the most part have easy grades. One is short, abrupt, unsafe except in the best weather and not to be attempted unless the climbers are roped together. As the trails differ, so do the experiences of the trampers. A great many have to come up one particular way. One's residence, the place where one is living, predetermines that. For others the choice of route is settled by personal taste. Yet others are ambi-

tious to try all the different trails and do not feel that they really possess the mountain till they have been over it by many paths. But with all these differences the main point is always just the same—to scale the summit, to get the vision from the top, to stand there with nothing between one and the skies and to breathe the air that seems to blow in from between the stars. If this be accomplished, the tramper is glad that there are so many different paths to the top and that others have arrived by ways different from his own.

At the center of the religious life there stands one peak that towers above all the rest and from whose summit one can view the entire country. There are many ways to this high place and many contrasts in the experience of the travelers. One's residence, the place one lives, the kind of person one is, predetermine in many cases by just what trail one climbs. At least these things make some paths more feasible than others. Personal liking and inclination are important. Some are ambitious to climb by different trails and will not feel that they possess the mountain till they have been up many paths. But the main point is always just the same, to reach the summit, to see the vision clearly, to stand on the naked peak where one breathes the very breath of God.

II

The trails up Mt. Washington can, for the most part, be divided into two groups, those coming

from the west and those coming from the east. So is it with prayer. The west is analytical, intellectual in the sense that it wants to take things to pieces and see just how they work. The east is mystical. It reaches for the experience without too much curiosity about underlying theories.

The intellectual approach to prayer is noble. Some men just simply have to come this way. Others by taste prefer it. Most never feel the mountain really theirs until they have included this trail with the rest. Jesus recognized this way and made clear his willingness to reason about prayer.

If we take this trail we shall walk through the whole country of the Christian interpretation of life. We shall feast our eyes on the only view that really and permanently satisfies us. We shall see God as our Father. We shall see that just as we have no adequate account, or really true account, of our parents on earth so long as we speak only of their strength and their wisdom, no true account until we speak also of their love to which their strength and wisdom are but servants, so we have no accurate account of God until after viewing His omnipotence and His omniscience we speak also of that love to which omnipotence and omniscience are but servants. So we shall see that communion between us and God is as natural, as logical, as inevitable as the conversation of any child with its loving parents. We shall also rise to the vision of our humanity as a fabric. We may listen to the many voices coming out of the psychology of to-day telling us that we are not

nearly so individual, not nearly so separate from one another as we used to think. But we shall listen even more to the voices of the heart telling us that we are members one of another. Therefore not only individual prayer, but intercessory prayer will appear to us natural, logical, inevitable. There is nothing more noble than the intellectual approach to prayer.

But much of the time we live to the eastward. There are two ways to go over a trail. You can go up or you can go down. Just as it happens that my favorite practice is to ascend Washington from the east and go down it to the west, so multitudes do best with prayer when they approach it from the practical and experimental side. Indeed trails are never well known until you have passed over them in both directions. No man can know well the western side of prayer until he has ascended by the practical, experimental approach and from the summit descended into the intellectual. Some have to ascend first from the west. It is well for all at some time to go over that trail, or at least be assured that it is there. But we all need to keep ascending from the east.

But if we need tolerance as between the eastern and the western, so do we need it as between the many approaches from the east. There is the carriage road for some and Tuckerman's Ravine for others. There is Huntington's Ravine or Boot Spur or Adam's Slide or the Great Gulf or others yet. I do not like to think for how many the prayer life has been made unattractive and repellent by the clamorous insistence that there is

only one way to climb, only one way to practice it. Shall we stand, or sit, or kneel? Shall we call on the ritual of the ages to help us or lisp our prayers in our own way? Shall the eyes be opened or closed? Shall the place be the bedside, at the desk, or on the train? Shall our prayers be spoken or inarticulate? Shall the hour be morning, noon or night? Shall we pray in a quiet company or all alone? To all these things that have often so pathetically divided Christians our answer is, "Do as you like. Take the way that works best with you. Only remember, the more ways the better. The more your trails the better your mastery of the mountain!"

III

Persistence is another thing that we shall certainly learn if we come to Jesus asking him to teach us to pray. Once he spoke a parable to the end that men ought always to pray and not to faint. That is the way to climb the mountain. Nobody who faints will get far. If on the lower slopes our heart fails us and we turn faint we must pull ourselves together. Weariness must be ignored. Starting, hurrying, and then starting and stopping and hurrying again, is not good. Plodding is the way. One always consulting his feelings is never a good companion. On a mountain trail he is impossible. Nor is there much chance of his getting far.

So is it in prayer. There are times—and if we

lived well there would be more of them—when prayer is impulsive and ecstatic. The spirit soars just as on the mountain there are hours when we seem to weigh nothing, we shout and sing, we move swiftly. Let us be thankful for such times. But he who confines his climbing to such hours will seldom reach the summit. Of nothing am I more sure than that in prayer we consult our feelings far too much. I have been with men who would have died on Mt. Washington if they had done that. They felt like lying down in the dark and weariness and cold by every big rock they found. Their only safety was to ignore their feelings and press on to the shelter at the top. We do not go to church, we do not worship, we do not pray, because we do not feel like it. What we think to be a good reason is the worst reason in the world. The fact that we do not want to go to church, that we do not feel like worshiping, that we have no strong impulse to pray, may be the best possible reason for doing all these things. Oh, the souls that never get beyond the tree line because they faint in the forest! We never need prayer so much as when the heart is cold. It was while Jesus was praying, not before it, that he was transfigured on the mount.

IV

If we pray with Jesus and as he teaches us, we shall also pray unselfishly. Mountaineers are amazingly unselfish. How readily they share sup-

plies, equipment, experience and knowledge. How quick they are to help any one that is injured or in need. So prayer must be. It must be unselfish as between man and man, and unselfish as between man and God. As Jesus' pupils we cannot have it otherwise.

How often we fail here. How often we find great spirits repelled from prayer because they see us fail here. We pray for mean advantages over our fellows. We pray for things that cannot be granted save as they hurt others more than we are helped. We would make a convenience of God, a handy man of all work around the place. How impossible it was for many of our war-time prayers ever to get above the tops of our own heads!

But our prayers are so selfish between man and man because they are selfish between man and God. That does not mean there is anything we cannot pray about. On the other hand there is nothing we cannot pray about if we are unselfish toward God, not even our health or the weather itself. Jesus could pray about the things that touched him most nearly in the Garden of Gethsemane, but all his garden prayers instead of being selfish were God-ish—"Nevertheless not my will but Thine be done." Then it was that the fountains of infinite strength were opened for him. Thus united with God he could see his world go down in ruin and yet come off victor. If we are Jesus' pupils in prayer, if we turn to God in his company and spirit, we shall dare to speak with

God of everything because we shall know the best thing for us and for our fellows is not for our little, ignorant wills to be foisted upon Him, but His great, wise and fatherly will to be fulfilled for all of us. Like Lincoln, we shall not be anxious whether God is on our side so much as we are anxious whether we are on His side, knowing that that is best.

V

Mountain climbers like to tell their experiences and we mountain lovers like to hear them talk whether they tell us of peaks on which we have not yet been or of their experience on peaks we already know. No mountain climbers can tell us all. If we follow where they have been we shall find meanings no language can capture and no words ever bring to us. Even so it is good for us to listen to those who have been high on the mount of prayer. They cannot tell us all. Listening to their narratives is no adequate substitute for our own climbing. But they can help us and they can stimulate our desire to climb. Listen then to a few of them.

Here is one to whom great joy has come. Business has succeeded and wealth been multiplied. Long-coveted success and power have at last arrived. Or after years of loneliness he has been given a happy home. Or a child has been born. Then either because he knew happiness is dangerous and can make the soul mean and small and

selfish and lead one to the dark and crooked ways of life, or just because his wholesome soul impelled him to gratitude and consecration, he went up into the mountain to pray. Listen to him. "I prayed about it all. I lifted it all to the great Giver. It was a joy for which I had worked and planned and many had helped me to it. But as I prayed it came over me that God is the source of all our getting. As I prayed it came over me that God is the God of all and plans for all a happiness equal to mine. As in my joy I prayed, I found God Himself rejoicing with me. Henceforth these gifts of wealth and power and home and family are sacred, they are pure, they are generous, they are free from the power to curse. I am thrice joyous now that in the gift I see the Giver and in my joy I feel His too." When we are glad it is good to go up into the mountain and pray.

Here is one who has been ill. He has a large religion. It is too large for him to deny God anywhere. He sees God working in all the laws of nature, in all the natural functions of the body. He sees God's spirit in that great profession of medicine to which the man who wrote our text belonged, and knows that it is with God's help that that profession has gone so far to rid the world of such things as smallpox, yellow fever and typhoid, and so far to check the ravages of diphtheria and scarlet fever and the rest. All this he reverently accepts. But he knows also that God works from within. He knows the mysterious linking of soul and flesh that none explain but

honest medicine more and more exalts. He says, "I prayed and my spirit mingled with the neighboring spirit of God. Well-being flowed into me. Fear stopped its manufacturing of poison. My very blood flowed more steadily, more clean, more rich. On the mountain top was healing."

Here is one who was discouraged. Either leaders or his fellows failed him. Work dragged and plans miscarried. Time fled and the years seemed fruitless. "But," he says, "I went up into the mountain to pray. I came near to the great, patient God by men so often betrayed, Whose plans are so often defeated by poor mortals, Who out of low defeat can bring a higher victory, and now my will is iron, my muscles steel, my nerves copper."

Here is one who speaks but quietly. "I was lonely. In the crowd I walked alone. Even with Peter, John and James I was in solitude. But I went up into the mountain to pray. I found an understanding men could not give, a fellowship men could not disturb. One with God is still a majority."

Was it a little fault that pricked and irritated? Was it a great sin that if known would have shocked the world and sent it running to its hideous, self-righteous ostracism? This man does not tell you that but only says, "I had sinned and then I went up into the mountain to pray. There above the cruel world I found no winking at my faults, but I found mercy, I found forgiveness, I found power for the sublimest thing this earth can ever see—to change my own evil into blessing

for God's children. The mount of prayer—it is the soul's Mount Everest."

"And I, I had enemies and hated them. I tried to pray. How hard it was. The trail was long and steep and slippery and my hatreds clutched me and held me back. I had to shake them off. Then, instead, I began to carry my very foes up with me. I stopped talking about them. It is worth reading all George Adam Smith ever wrote just to find these sentences. 'There is one very good practical rule to keep us safe. We may allow ourselves to speak about our erring brothers to men, just as much as we pray for them to God. But if we pray much for a man, he will surely become too sacred to be made the amusement of society or the food of our curiosity or of our pride.' The trail grew easier. I reached the summit. I came back free. I had to come back a lover."

"I had my problems. I will not say whether they were household cares or the ethics of business or the high problems of a ministry. But I was puzzled and shut in. Then I went up into the mountain to pray. I went where the view is. Now I see, see enough for the day's work. I shall go there often."

It is a real mountain. It rises from the plain of our common life. It has many trails and all are good and all are worth knowing. Let us be on them often. Let us climb ardently, unselfishly, and rest not till in our own way we reach the summit.

XX: CAMPING OUT

Hebrews 11: 9. "He became a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a land not his own, dwelling in tents."

IT is doubtful whether any other land and people have ever been so closely associated in the thought of mankind as have the land of Palestine and the Hebrew people. It is doubtful whether there has even been any love of a people for a city to match the love of the Jews for Jerusalem. It has been deeper, more ancient and more tender than the love of the English for London or the French for Paris. It has been more united than that of the Italians for Rome or the Greeks for Athens. It has persisted through absence and exile as none of these have done. But this sentence which we have taken this morning for our text carries us at a single bound back into those days when the Hebrews had no part or lot in Canaan. They were still a wandering tribe like many another of that day. For wearying periods of time they were still to travel over lands that belonged to no one or, what was far harder, to dwell on lands belonging to others. Jerusalem was not yet builded, although some heathen village may have been upon its heights. Centuries were to pass before King David took it for his people. Not even were the lowlands occupied as yet. Not even

was there any army attempting to occupy them. All Canaan was as little Hebrew as it had ever been.

Yet somewhere in that land of Canaan there was a tent—not even a rude house of clay and straw such as that time knew how to build, but just a tent made of a few sticks and a few rough skins. And in that tent there slept each night a man whose name was Abraham, while with him or in other tents like his own or under the open sky there slept his little family and company of servants. He had come there from Ur of the Chaldees which was in the parts of Mesopotamia, the nursery of many tribes. He had come there after living in Ur so long that we should call him already an old man. And he was not now living in any one place in Canaan. His tent was always moving and he was moving with it. It was now here and now there; now near by and now yonder. At times famine even drove him from the country altogether and he had to visit Egypt. He was not a resident of Canaan; he was only a sojourner. He was there as in a land not his own. But it was because he first came there as a stranger that by and by a nation came there to dwell. First the one man giving up his settled home in Ur of the Chaldees to dwell in tents, then the great people with their cities and their temple and their palaces. First the sojourner as in a land not his own, then the race so wedded to the land that no distance, no suffering, no length of absence, can

ever make them feel that land is anything but theirs.

I

It is the story of one man and of his people. But is it not also the story of all human progress? Somewhere beyond Ur of the Chaldees there is always the land of Canaan. Somewhere beyond the settled attainments of life there is always a region of the unattained that men might possess, that men were meant to possess, but that they do not possess as yet. Then if there is to be any growth, visits are made in that unknown region; the settled abode is left for a period of sojourning. Presently the visits are made longer and not alone. The new country loses its strangeness. The tents are changed into houses. The frontier of life has been advanced and we are ready to begin to repeat the process. This, I say, is the way of progress in each sphere of life. It is so in science when some man like Edison turns from all the inventions that have been made and sojourns long in a land of promise until he makes his new invention and the whole world glows with a new light. It is so in geography when some traveler like Columbus turns his back on all the places where other men are dwelling to sojourn long on strange seas and to camp on strange shores, and then by and by the people of three continents are at his heels and where he slept beneath the naked sky great cities rise to rival the cities of the older

world. It is so when some moralist, practicing all the virtues that other folk have learned, forges out some new ideal to sting the souls of men, and by and by we all look back in wonder that the teaching of such a man ever should have been needed. It is so when some warrior of the Kingdom, denying none of the responsibilities that other men have learned to carry, makes himself responsible where no one else has cared until a whole nation learns a new virtue. The world has never been much interested in the life of Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees. The world has always been greatly interested, and must be, in his tenting in the land of promise. For it is when from the familiar and the attained we press out into the unknown—though we live there as in a country not our own—it is then that life gains meaning.

II

Now all this becomes of vast importance when we turn to thinking of the welfare of religion. Nothing is more common, nothing is more dangerous, than the assumption that somehow the cause of religion both in the church and in the individual is bound to take care of itself. How many men and women there are in the community, how many in the church, who are sincerely concerned for the welfare of the church and keenly watching to see whether it succeed or fail, but who never read any summons to themselves out of the church's situation and never read any summons to the church

out of the changes of our times. They have paid a certain amount and sort of attention to the church for many years. They will pay just that amount and just that sort for many years to come, but whether the church goes up or down, whether it grows or shrivels, you can't get them to pay any other sort of attention or any other amount. Even when they really cannot give any reason against it, you can't get them to attend any meetings they have not long attended, to join any organization of which they were not charter members, to further any movement that does not bear the marks of antiquity. They will reside in Ur of the Chaldees. They will not tent in the land of promise. It is well that they do all that they do do, but the larger future of the church is not with them.

And how often just this spirit may capture a whole church. In the midst of swiftly changing times it does not itself dream of changing in the least but boldly and fatally asumes that just the same forms of life and work that accomplished so much fifty or one hundred years ago will accomplish all that's needed now. It argues that the church has always done certain things; therefore it must always do them. It argues that the church has never done certain other things; therefore it need never do them. It sounds very wise. It is very silly. It seems to have the weight of history behind it. It really is the negation of all history. With that spirit, the name of Abraham would have died with him and then who knows

that the history of the Hebrew people, the most glorious nation's history the world knows, would ever have been written? When that spirit prevails in the church universal it always stagnates and awaits some tumultuous hours of reform like those of Martin Luther. When that spirit prevails in any single church, the days of that church's real life and vital service are already numbered.

We need to recall that the church of Christ is still young in the drama of the centuries. We need to recall that each separate church is still young in the service that it ought to render and the influence it ought to wield. As we have come to see that Abraham's greatness was not dwelling in Ur of the Chaldees, but tenting in the land of promise, so sometime we shall look back on these years of our church life and see that their greatness is with those who are dreaming larger ways of service; those who, gladdened by the church that has been, are yet planning for the greater church that is to be, those who, keeping all the precious heritage of past attainment and experience, are yet most happy when they are tenting in the Canaan that they mean sometime shall be ours.

III

One is greatly tempted to apply this same line of thought to all those movements for a kinder and juster social order that so adorn our day, but

just now I want to move in another direction. I want to show how all that we have been saying about the life of the church applies also to our own lives. It is bad enough when one assumes that the cause of the church can take care of itself. It is worse, and perhaps in large measure the cause of the first evil, when we assume that religion in our own lives is something toward which we have no responsibility. Yet multitudes are doing just that. They tell you how they *like* religion as if religion were as much a matter of taste as the latest style in millinery or as much a matter of convenience as the last change in the weather. They tell you just how much it appeals to them and, if you suggest that it ought to appeal more, they politely repeat that it does not and put the blame of its failure entirely upon it. Or perhaps they are yearning after religion with a homesickness as wide as is the world and yet, finding so little of its faith and love and motive moving in their own lives, they never think themselves in any way to blame.

It may be I am speaking to some such person here to-day. Religion has always seemed desirable to you. You have always assumed that sometime you would have it. The experience of others, the words of religious teachers, even the words of the Bible, have seemed to promise it to you, but somehow it has not arrived, or not arrived in any way so great as you have wished. So you are beginning to surmise that there is nothing in it for you after all.

But before you draw that conclusion, ought you not to ask yourself a question? Have you ever tented in the promised land? You have seen what faith can do for men, how the conviction of God and the certainty of Jesus and the clear vision of the meaning of life can make a man like a rock amid shifting sands, like a star clear and untroubled above all the passing cloud and storm of life. You have looked into this promised land. Have you ever tented there? Have you ever slowly and deliberately turned your back on all the more common theories of life and lived, really lived, for a whole day as if God were true and Christ were near, doing in everything both great and small all that God has ever told you of his will? You have seen the beauty of love. You have watched some folk while the divine love has streamed down upon them just as you have sometimes stood in a darkened room and looked out on other folk walking in the glory of the sunshine. You have seen how some men and women radiate love till all the relationships of their lives are sweet and true and happy. But have you ever deliberately and consciously opened your own life to the inflow of that life divine? Have you ever tried hard yourself to live that love? Most of these folk whom you now see so beautified by love tented in Canaan before ever it became their home. Or you have walked with some man who has been filled with the motive of religion. You have seen how with him duty is no more a burden, virtue is no more a task, service is no more a grim

demand, but virtue is a joy, usefulness is a passion. Even sacrifice has become to him an ecstasy. You have said, and you have meant it, "I wish I were like that." But have you ever tented where that man dwells—close in the constant fellowship of the Man of Galilee who is able to take away our old hearts and give us new ones till we are new creatures in Christ Jesus? There is no thought of goodness in your mind so good; there is no longing for virtue in your heart so high, that it may not all come true. But there is no thought of goodness in your mind so good, there is no longing for virtue in your heart so great, that it will ever come true all of itself any more than Canaan came to Abraham while he still lived in Ur. You must go to camp in the land of promise. If as yet you cannot make that land your own, at least you must pitch your tent there. Then by and by the land where you tent to-day you will live in forever.

IV

So we arrive at this most profound truth about ourselves. The most important thing about you is not the virtues among which you have long resided. The most important thing about you is the virtues or the vices among which you pitch your tent. What you do in the routine of the daily life means much but not so much as what you do when the routine has ended and you can take your choice. The things you have to think

about because the circumstance of home or work require it have much importance, but what do you think about when you don't have to think of anything at all? Abraham was an old man when he left Ur for Canaan, but all the years of his strength that he had spent residing in Ur did not mean so much as the years of his old age that he spent tenting in Canaan. The tasks that absorb ninety percent of your time and energy may not mean nearly so much as what you do with your spare time and your surplus energy. Where you sojourn to-day you live to-morrow.

This truth that means so much for us as individuals also has a mighty meaning for our friendships. To be with men in the familiar and customary things of their lives is much, but to help them pitch their tents in the land of promise is more than to know them in their established dwellings. It is worth while knowing men in all the good they have learned to do and all the virtues they have attained. Much of the friendship of life never gets beyond this point. But surely it is better, deeper, more repaying and more useful, to know a man where he is pitching his tent on toward Jerusalem. To visit him in Ur of the Chaldees is not to be despised, but to go with him when he tents in the land of his promise; to know him at his point of struggle; to meet him at his point of need; to stand beside him when the famine gnaws and his enemies are smiting him; to companion him in the loneliness of a divine ambition; to be one of the little company that knows his tent

in Canaan and help him turn it into a residence—this is really to know the man; this is to enter into the deepest and sweetest and divinest sort of friendship that this world can show.

Yes, and this was the sort of friend that Jesus was. Beyond the dwelling he always saw the tent. There was Simon who no one thought would ever be anything but the robust, impetuous fisherman of Galilee. But Jesus saw a tent and made him into Peter, a man of stone. There was the woman taken in her shame and to be stoned as hopeless even as society is ever stoning such. But Jesus said, "No, she has a tent in a better country, let her go there and sin no more." There was Saul, standing by at Stephen's martyrdom and breathing out threatenings and slaughter all the way to Damascus. But Jesus said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me; Ur of the Chaldees is no place for you." And by that word the persecutor became Paul, the great apostle.

Somewhere in the tent land of your life that same great Christ is standing. If you will let him, he will help you turn your tent, even the tent that now seems farthest off and most dangerous and most hopeless, into a home for you to live there forever. If we will let him, he then will take us with him through the tent lands of the lives of other men to help them turn their tents into everlasting houses.

XXI: THE BONDS OF GRATITUDE

Before Thanksgiving Day

2 Samuel 3: 16. "He would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto Jehovah."

TO the hasty reading of a schoolboy this might well sound like ungrateful waste. I readily recall the time when it seemed just that to me. But to a maturer reading it becomes one of the most beautiful and fitting things that the great nature of King David ever did.

Those who have always drunk water from a faucet in a well-plumbed house connected with some municipal water supply may find it hard to understand the longings that mature men often feel for the wells of their youth. I vividly recall how my father used to speak of a certain deep well on a Berkshire hillside. Neither the excellent water supply of the village where we were then living nor all the springs of Europe could equal the freshness, coolness, sweetness of the water the well-sweep used to bring in dripping buckets from the depths of that well to satisfy the playing boy or the toiling young man. Somewhat so had David thought of the well that was near the gate of Bethlehem. But when three of his strong men broke through the Philistine army, pushed their way to that gate, drew water from that well and

then forced their way back again to put it in the hands of their chief, "He would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto Jehovah." There are some things too good to be merely enjoyed. There are some things too precious to employ them for our personal satisfaction. We cannot treat them that way without insulting them and degrading ourselves, as if you used a canvas by Rubens to shut out the weather or the cross of Christ for a clothes pole.

Two things made that water such a gift for David. It did come from the well near the gate of Bethlehem, from the well that God had made clearer and cooler and sweeter than any other water. It was like drinking from the hand of Deity. And to the heavenly gift three strong men had added their devotion, risking their very lives till David said there was really blood in that cup. Therefore he would not insult the cup and degrade himself by treating it as a good merely to be enjoyed, a possession to be employed merely for his personal satisfaction. Instead he dedicated it and thereby dedicated himself. "He would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto Jehovah."

I

Thanksgiving Day is near once more. Again our tables will be decked with all the fruits of the field. Again we shall rejoice in the health and strength of our homes and in the gathering of our families. Again we shall marvel at the

prosperity we enjoy as a people and take pride that we seem to be the favorite nation of the Almighty. And it all presents us with precisely the alternatives that were presented to David. The day may be as selfish, as insulting, as degrading as it would have been for him to drink that cup. The day may be as noble and ennobling as were the deeds of the three men and of their king.

Think again of some of our blessings and how like they are to the water brought to David. The foods that will be on our tables are but symbols of the vast wealth that we enjoy. Whenever before in the history of the world has there been a nation whose average plenty equaled that of the United States? And we here are not average. We are far above the average. We are the highly favored in the richest nation of the globe. What we spend just to live would support four or eight times our population in many another community. And we can take it just as a matter of course. We can enjoy it to the full with no thought except that of self-congratulation—and not too much of that. We can help fulfill the prophecy I recently heard spoken by a college president, that America was about to use the quiet, thrifty, frugal man in the White House to stage a period of the most riotous expenditure and self-indulgence that this country has ever seen. We can be David grabbing the cup and gulping it down.

Or we can recall whence this wealth came. We can trace it back step by step till we see it all coming out of Mother Earth. We can remember

that God put it there, as truly as he put water in the well at Bethlehem. And we can picture the toil that men have expended upon it before it ever came to be ours. "We taste the spices of Arabia, but never feel the scorching sun that brought them forth." Have you ever been in a coal mine where men labor in filth and peril far "from the last of the sun" in order that our homes may be heated and our meals cooked and the wheels of our industry kept turning? Have you ever toiled all the summer's day in the treeless heat of an open field? Have you ever tended a steel furnace? Have you ever counted not the three, but the great multitude that have put their lives into the wealth that we call ours? It would seem to me that just the thought of this toil, so often hard and perilous and ill-requited, must move us to say thanks over our tables next Thursday, even if we feel no higher impulse. Can we sit there and not dedicate our wealth, thereby dedicating ourselves?

II

We shall most of us be thanking God for health and strength. But shall we just grasp these gifts and enjoy them? Shall we say it is our right to squander them in any sort of life that gives the most pleasure to our senses? Whence came this gift of health? Compare the health of this community with that of any American village two hundred years ago. Compare it with the health of any village in India to-day, or with the world health

before Columbus set sail. Your health and mine is like the water brought to David by the coöperation of men with God. God made us for health and happiness and put within our reach the laws by which health can be maintained and often restored. There is no more heroic story, no more mighty story, no more Christian story in all the world than the tale of the utterly honest, courageous, self-sacrificing labors of those men who have fought our battles with disease and given us our health. The very health that blesses us and that enables us to enjoy our wealth was brought us by heroic hands. It will not do merely to enjoy it, teasing our bodies to give us every thrill of which the senses are capable. We must dedicate it and ourselves with it.

It is a national holiday next Thursday. We shall be exhorted to thank God for our country and to glory in its greatness. Well may we do both these things. But even as we do them we shall be confronted again with the alternatives of David. How often we elect the ignoble alternative! We glory in the Bill of Rights. We will fight any man who tries to abridge our freedom of speech. And then we ourselves call down all the forces of government and the anathemas of religion on some one else just because he says things that we do not like. We rear monuments to the forefathers who built into our government their sublime and reasoned faith that truth needs nothing but a fair field. And then, in childish infidelity and insult to the truth that needs no

defense from us, we clap into jail men who honestly differ from ourselves. We shout about one hundred percent Americanism, when on examination it turns out we mean nothing but our partial Americanism and the particular political and economic arrangements that suit our selfish convenience. We grow heroic about law and order, meaning the order that it is comfortable for us to have others maintain and the laws it will help us to have other folk obey, while we break any law we please and can, even some duly written into the sacred Constitution! If there is any peril to our land to-day, it is not Japan, it is not Russia, it is not socialism, it is not communism, it is not bolshevism, it is not the foreigner. It is this attitude, welcomed in our offices and our parlors, this attitude which says this country, these laws, this Constitution are ours, existing just for us, are ours selfishly to use and to enjoy, our cup to snatch and drain and crash upon the ground.

Whence came these things? They came out of the well of God. They came out of the Divine urge that God buried in the deep places of the human spirit—the urge to liberty, the urge to democracy, the urge to brotherhood, the urge to truth. And what hands have brought them to us, through what pathways of Philistine peril! Read Amos and Hosea and feel again their suffering. Read the struggles of the Roman plebs. Read what our sires did at Runnymede. Sail with the little company across the North Atlantic. Watch their cemeteries grow faster than their gardens.

Go with Washington to Valley Forge. Feel the agonizing strife of brothers when the nation needed a new birth in freedom, that government of the people, by the people, for the people—not for you and me, but for the people—should not perish from the earth. Your country? Your laws? Your Constitution? They are not yours. That is to insult them and to degrade yourselves. They are God's and humankind's.

III

We are at peace. We are at peace. From sea to shining sea, we are at peace, with friendship on the north and impotence on the south. There is not a nation in the world that can safely challenge our strength. There need not be a nation that is not our friend. The financial capitals of the world that took millenniums to pass from the Tigris and the Euphrates to the Seine and the Thames have passed almost over night to the Hudson and Lake Michigan. About all the solid credit left in the world is ours. We are at peace.

Peace! What is it? A thing to play with? A thing to use? A thing to enjoy? A cup to drain? It has a history! There was a time when every man's hand was against every other man's. But deep in the impulses of the race God had prepared something better. Gradually the spring became a well. Then through slowly widening concentric circles the impulse made its way in the world. Strife yielded to coöperation. War gave way to

fellowship. Individuals were linked in families, families in clans, clans in tribes, tribes in races, races in states, and states in empires. Force waned. Brotherhood waxed. Republics took the place of empires. Our American unity does not rest on force, but on the higher moral qualities. The British Empire is increasingly misnamed. It becomes more and more a league of free nations. From a well at Bethlehem, where once the angels sang of peace on earth, how much of this cool, sweet water has been drawn!

And what hands have brought the water to us! Time fails to number them, but a third-grade child can recall more than any one can number. Not three, but more than three million American youths—not three, but nearly thirty million of the youth of the world. They did not fight merely to wreck one empire, however arrogant. They did not fight merely to move the centers of imperialism a few hundred miles further west. They did not go Philistine paths to build another balance of power that another assassin's bullet can overturn, plunging the world into some fresh and final woe. Those who speak to us in silent eloquence from the tablets on the walls of this church had another dream than that—the dream of a war to end war; of a peace that stops at no border, north or south or east or west, but builds on justice and wraps the world in its beneficence; a parliament of man and federation of the world. "He would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto Jehovah." He said there was something

like blood in the cup. Shall we do what David would not do? Shall we say that the cup brought from so far and by so heroic hands is brought just for us and our enjoyment? Shall we say that having traveled so far it is to stop with us; that having reached our national boundaries, beyond them there shall be nothing but suspicion, neglect and hate? Oh, America! Shall America do this? Shall we?

IV

There is still a well by the gate of Bethlehem, with water pure and cool and sweet and fresh, the water of our Christian faith for which lives the church. It is that faith that has made our homes safe and beautiful, that has made our children messengers from God, that gives womanhood its chance and inspires manhood in the paths of service, that robs the grave of its sting and death of its victory, that links all men in one brotherhood. It is that faith that unveils the face of the Eternal, till the meanest can look up and call Him "Father." We did not make that faith. What hands have brought it to us? What hearts have bled for it?—the hands and hearts of those who built this church, the Pilgrims who in its power built our free institutions, the heroes who threaded the European forest when our ancestors were still worshiping as Druids and offering human sacrifices in the name of religion, Knox

and Wickliffe and Francis and Paul and Jesus with his cross!

We all enjoy this religion. We all are benefited by it. We all live in its vast advantage. And yet how many do nothing but that, and how often the best of us does nothing but that!—lifting no hand, giving nothing, or giving with no joy, to help the cause; even selfishly delaying its hopes and plans; basking in its benefits, but sharing them with none; ranging ourselves with the Philistines who block the ways between Bethlehem and our world, or carelessly drinking the cup. David said there is blood in it.

There is yet more water in the well and there are hearts homesick with longing for it, and the church has not done its duty yet, and there is time left in which to recognize "The Bonds of Gratitude," and Thanksgiving week is a good time to do that and to join the three heroic men in the spirit of King David.

XXII: THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

2 Corinthians, 9: 15. "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift."

IN studying any text of scripture we turn first of all to the context in which it stands. Usually we find near it other verses that are much like it. Likenesses and deep connections between it and the surrounding paragraphs immediately appear. But in the case of this sudden burst of Christmas joy with which Paul closes the ninth chapter of Second Corinthians nothing of the kind is true. Paul has not been talking about Christ. Paul has not been talking about Christmas. Only once in this whole chapter has Jesus been mentioned, and then in the most casual way. Instead, Paul has been talking about one of the most homely details of church administration. He has been talking about a collection—a collection for the saints at Jerusalem. The Gentile churches that he served had a very tender feeling for the parent church in Judea. Therefore, very largely at Paul's suggestion, they had been engaged for many months in making up an offering for the poor saints at Jerusalem. It was about this offering that Paul had been writing. He had told something about the spirit in which he wanted it made, something of the time at which it must be completed, something of the amount which he wished

it to total. Surely church collections, necessary as they are, do not suggest the most highly spiritual themes. But then suddenly and without a word of warning Paul breaks into the exclamation, "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift," and then the chapter ends.

Why this sudden burst of Christmas joy? It must be that although he had not been writing of Christ and had not been thinking of Christ Paul somehow had been feeling in his bones that Christ had a great deal to do with all that of which he was writing and thinking. The beauty of this collection, the great human meaning of it, the high spiritual bond that it expressed, all passed before Paul's mind, and then through all this there came out upon his vision the great figure of the Christ as the one who really explained it all, the one without whom it could not have taken place. Therefore does he cry, "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift."

Surely Paul was right about this. That which bound the early churches together was not dogma, although of course great new doctrines were being given to them. That which bound the early churches together was not an ecclesiastical organization, although of course new organizations were being formed and some of them were very beautiful and prophetic. But that which bound the early churches together was their worship of a common person, even of Jesus Christ. It was his touch upon them, it was his spirit breathed among them, that made them really one and

deeply concerned in one another. Surely, then, St. Paul was right, and if we look a little beneath many of the best and most precious things of our own day shall we not find the same explanation that he found?

I

Paul had been writing about the charity of the early church. Turn now and look at the charity of to-day. Not all of it is noble. Some of it is mere convenience or convention. Some of it is a bid for popularity or is practiced as good advertising. Some of it is a sop to a troubled conscience. But upon the whole, charity is too expensive a thing for much of it to be hypocritical. And when we get to the higher forms of charity, do we not often find Christ there? How much of the charity that wants nothing in return, the charity that glories in the fact that there can be nothing given in return, is explained by the influence of One who spent his entire life for those who could never recompense him in kind but often repaid him with ingratitude and misunderstanding and scorn—and a Cross! When we gather in our church to give our hundreds for some dusky folk in the heart of Africa whom we have never seen and never shall see, why do we do it if not because of One who has made us feel that in the deepest reality of things they and we are brothers and therefore they must have all the best things that we have? When I see how much of the better

charity of the world flows out of the church, when I see how instinctively men turn first to the church when there is any hard giving to be done, I feel we too must cry, "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift."

Then there is Christmas. Can we explain it without Christ? I know its pagan origin, but that is no argument against it. The pagan feast has been like a bit of matter in the earth that is taken up by the plant and turned into a flower and then into a wholesome fruit and then has been eaten by some person and now is a part of the strength of a strong man or the beauty of a noble woman. It is the final use of the matter that gives it its meaning. Somewhat so has the old pagan feast been taken up by the Christian movement and been filled with a new spirit and given a new worth. The Christmas that is sympathy, that is more than all giving and getting, more than any custom, however beautiful; the Christmas that is a great tide of sympathy flowing into all the recesses of our common life to-day and moving us almost to tears; the sense that we and the world are one to-day and that there is not any hatred or dislike among us that is meant to live but love and peace and good will must come out everywhere—where do we get this Christmas if not from Jesus? We go to our churches on Christmas day because we recognize to whom we owe it. As this last week I have seen our streets so full of good cheer, so crowded with persons laden with the gifts that shall tell of their sympathy and love; as I have

seen some of our mail cars merrily decked with green upon their roofs; as I think of the great, glad gatherings of families held in millions of homes about the world to-day, I say, "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift."

II

Childhood—where do we get that? There have always been children in the world, but the world has not always possessed its childhood as something to be guarded, adored and followed. The children are the future of the world. No others should be so carefully and gently nurtured. The children have come more lately than we out of the hand of God and they have come "trailing clouds of glory." They remember much of their origin that we have long since forgotten and therefore we need to follow them, for Jesus tells us that only to such as they are the doors of the Kingdom of Heaven open. Golyer was right when he said,

> "I never seed nothing nor could or can
> Jest git all the good from the heart of a man
> Like the hands of a little child."

And it is because there is much good in the little child. It is reported that a wise man once said of one of our respectable cities that if the children were taken out of it the militia would be there in two weeks. But there are now and then great forces which rise up and try to take child-

hood away from us. There are dark dogmas, there are great forces of greed that try to do this. But don't we know that the One who does the most to make those dogmas unbelievable and the One who does the most to break the shackles of greed from the lives of little children is Christ? If we ever doubted that we need only to be reminded that his day is always their day too. For Christmas belongs most of all unto the children. Going up and down the elevators of some of our great department stores these last weeks I have noticed again and again that it is at the floors where the toys are kept that the elevators empty and fill. Some days ago a Christian mother in Boston asked one of the city missionaries to find six little children who had never seen a Christmas tree. That missionary asked all the other city missionaries, and they all tried to do it. But they failed. The only possibilities were the children of certain immigrant families very lately come. Christ's day is their day too. In the name of the blessed childhood of the world let us say, "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift."

III

Then ourselves—don't we owe them to this same gift? Here is a man who has long had a sign over his shop door with the word "blacksmith" written on it. But one day a man who is a real master of metal working comes into his shop and teaches him his trade as he had never

dreamed of any one's conceiving it. Then you hear that blacksmith saying, "My friend has given me myself." Here is a man who has long been a player of the violin, self-taught on shipboard or in some country village. But one day he meets a master of that wonderful instrument, he takes lessons of that master, and now he says that he has just begun to be a real violinist. So all of us need some master to bring us into our intended heritage. It is a different thing to be an architect since Wren builded. It is a different thing to be a sculptor since Michelangelo held the chisel. It is a different thing to be a man since Jesus was one. We know now that we were not made for sin. As we see that pure life we understand that we were made for righteousness. We know now that we were not made for weakness. As we see that triumphant life we know how God means us to be strong. We know now that we were not made for indulgence. As we watch him going about doing good and bearing the woes of humanity upon his shoulders, we know that service is the wealth of life. We know now that we were not made to die. As we feel the fullness of the life that beat in him and behold it overcoming death itself, we know that we, too, are meant to be children of the resurrection. We know the divinest place in all the world is home, for it was through the portals of a human home that God came most fully into the world. We know that the divinest thing in all this world is a human being, for when God came to express Himself most

completely it was in a human life He dwelt. As we think together of all the higher meanings and hopes of our humanity, let us all say together, "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift."

Take out of the world the charity that Christ inspires, erase Christmas from our calendar, deprive childhood of the protection and the nurture of the Christ, forget all that he has done for our common humanity, and should we really care to live?

IV

But we do more than sum up all this when we say that Christ gave us our God. God has always been. Men have always had gods. So great is the demand of the human heart for God that when men could not get God in any other way they made gods for themselves. But what gods they made! It was a Christian missionary proclaiming God in a heathen land who was met by the demand, "If you know where God is, tell us quickly that we may kill him, for who but He blasts our crops and kills our cattle and takes away our wives and little children?" That is the sort of god men make for themselves. But our God we didn't make. He came to us from Jesus and in Jesus and through Jesus. This God Who is our Father; Who, like as you fathers pity your little children when they are ill, pities all of us in our folly and our need; Who, more than you parents rejoice to-day to fill your children's hands with gifts, rejoices ever to

give the best things of eternity to you and me; this Father from Whom we come, to Whom we go, by Whom all our noisy years are surrounded by great peace; this Father to Whom, because He is our Father and theirs, we can entrust even our lost saints; this Father who feels for our weakness, Who suffers with us and for us in our sins that He may save us from them—why, even those who deny Christ go to Christ to get this Father, for He is not to be found in any other place. When we see him we see the Father. When we know him we know the Father. "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift."

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